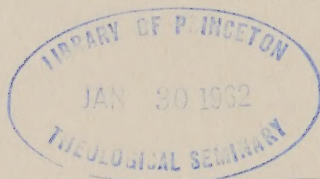
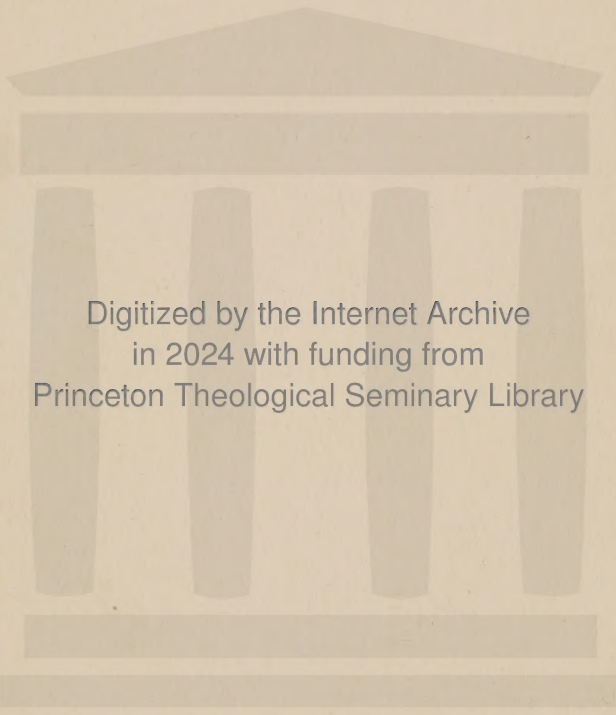


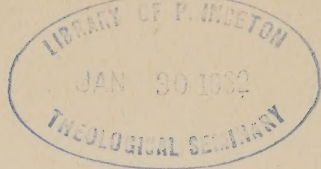
VOICES FROM
THE
WILDERNESS



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Cole, Maurice F.
Voices from the wilderness



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VOICES FROM THE WILDERNESS

Maurice F. Cole ✓

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Maurice F. Cole

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EDWARDS BROTHERS, INC.

Ann Arbor, Michigan

To my wife Sara Nancy, and
our forty years together

COVERS ILLUSTRATED
by Post Offices

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VOICES FROM THE WILDERNESS

When we speak today of "Home Missions", or use the more modern term, "National Missions", we have in mind the crowded tenement districts in our large cities, or some of the backward areas of our mountains in the South, or work among the Indian tribes of the Southwest, or among the migrants as they travel from place to place throughout our land, in search of seasonal employment.

It was not many years ago, however, when Michigan itself was the object of very extensive home missionary efforts, and missionaries in the truest sense of the word were sent among us to establish churches, and to encourage and strengthen Christianity wherever found. In fact, throughout the entire Great Lakes region and the "Western Valley", as the Mississippi Valley was then called, missionaries in large numbers were sent from the East. The privations and trials which they were required to endure were as severe and discouraging as those suffered now by our missionaries at home or in the foreign field. Michigan was one of the most fertile fields of this great missionary enterprise.

It is well recognized that the first missionaries to establish outposts in the Middle West were the French priests, who travelled by canoe up the St. Lawrence River and through the Great Lakes, establishing missions at strategic points, and enduring great hardship in an effort to Christianize the native Indian. The history of Michigan, for instance, could not be written without mention of Fathers Marquette, Allouez, Hennepin and others.

Probably the first Protestant group to make an effort to settle here, however, was the Moravian. Some of the members of this church settled near Mount Clemens at an early day, and

Moravian Drive, to the west of that city, today reminds us of their efforts at colonization there. The Moravians came to Michigan Territory even before it was actually a part of the United States, in fact, they came during the early days of the Revolutionary War. After remaining a few years, the Moravians moved on to new territory.

Except for the fur traders, and the soldiers stationed at the several military forts on the Great Lakes, there were but few inhabitants of Michigan Territory other than the native Indian until after the close of the War of 1812. In fact, an early missionary to the Farmington area, a few miles out of Detroit, as late as March of 1832, wrote that "Until eight years ago next month there was not a family of white people in the town—the ground was occupied only by the Indian and the wild beasts of the forest."

As a pension or bounty for the veterans of the War of 1812, our government set aside many thousands of acres of land in Michigan and other territories in the Mississippi Valley, hoping thereby both to pay a debt to our soldiers and also to settle the great Northwest Territory. At about the same time passenger boats began to ply the Great Lakes. With the completion of the Erie Canal a few years later a steady flow of emigration from New York and the New England states began. Michigan was one of the favorite destinations of this great stream of pioneers. "Michigan fever," which the people in the East called the wide-spread interest in emigrating to Michigan, was a malady for which there was no cure, until those contracting it 'had come and seen'."

The port of Detroit was the door through which most of the immigrants entered Michigan Territory. From there they found their way up the streams or over the Indian trails into the interior.

One of the early arrivals was the Reverend John Montieith, who reached Detroit, then a town of about one thousand inhabitants, in June of 1816. A graduate of the Princeton Theological Seminary, Montieith was sent as a Presbyterian missionary to this new region, and here he exerted a great influence, in both religious and secular affairs, for many years. He organized the First Protestant Society of Detroit, which we know today as The First Presbyterian Church, and was one of the founders and the first president of what is now the University of Michigan, which was then located in Detroit. In this latter venture he was ably assisted by Father Gabriel Richard, prominent Roman Catholic priest, who lost his life in the cholera epidemic in Detroit in 1832.

The Methodists also were early to establish a church in Michigan Territory. Probably their first church building was located on the River Rouge, there being few roads into the interior in those early days, and most of the early inland settlements being located on the rivers, such as the Rouge, Raisin, Huron, Clinton, St. Joseph and others.

The village of Pontiac is credited with having had the first Baptist church building in Michigan Territory, and so it goes. Each of the denominations sent missionaries into the field, and it is from the reports sent back East by these missionaries that we obtain some of the most accurate information as to the life of the early settlers of our state.

These reports, often in the nature of informal letters, furnish us with intimate and first hand accounts of life as it was lived at the time. Too often our history is based upon the recollections of our pioneers, written many years after the happening of the events of which they write, with the inevitable confusion as to sequence and personalities, and the resulting inaccuracies.

We have come into the possession of about one hundred of these missionary letters, which were purchased for their philatelic value. Most of them are reports sent back East to the American Home Missionary Society. This was a benevolent Protestant organization, sponsoring Presbyterian and Congregational missionaries and ministers, largely in the Northwest Territory.

The contents of these letters are so interesting, however, and tell so well the experiences of these missionaries and the life they led, that they make a definite contribution to the history of the state. Being semi-official, that is, being informal reports of their activities as missionaries, it was thought that no breach of confidence or good taste would result from the publication of these letters.

As has been previously stated, most of the missionaries whose letters are reproduced here were sent out by the American Home Missionary Society. The home office was located at 144 Nassau Street, New York City.

These missionaries were sent out under a Commission, usually extending for a period of one year, but customarily renewed from year to year. These commissions would state the salary to be received and usually the churches or areas where the men were to labor. It would appear from some of the letters, however, that in some instances the missionary was given some latitude as to where he would work.

The quarterly reports which the missionaries were required to make to the home office were supposed to cover several specific items. Some of the reports followed this requirement almost to the letter. Most of them, however, were quite informal in nature, and although the general subjects were eventually covered, the order of subjects treated was not followed in the requested sequence, and often some of the data was omitted entirely.

It would appear that the specific data upon which reports were requested by the home office were as follows:

1. Name of the Church or churches covered by the report.
2. Number of hopeful conversions.
3. Number added to the church by profession.
4. Number added by letter.
5. Number of Sunday School pupils.
6. Number of volumes in the Sunday School library.
7. Number of signers of the Temperance pledge.
8. Number of new churches organized.
9. Amount of contributions to
 - (a) Home Missions;
 - (b) Foreign Missions.
10. Average attendance on preaching services.

Brief comments might be appropriate on some of the data requested in these reports.

"Hopeful conversions" were frequently mentioned in the reports. These apparently referred to persons who had given some indications of interest in the Christian cause and gave promise of later formally joining the church. The actual conversion would be then reflected in item No. 3.

In respect to item No. 6, it should be remembered that these missionaries were working in an actual wilderness, at least during the first few years. There were but few towns, as we now know them, but at best sparse clusters of log cabins, and more often isolated cabins at some distance from each other. As the pioneers came from the East, they usually brought only the very minimum of household belongings, both because of the difficulty of transportation over the trails and roads then in existence, and because of transportation costs.

This resulted in there being but few books in the territory. There were no such things as public libraries in these communities, and books were at a great premium. In order that the settlers might read the proper kind of books, the missionaries were encouraged to develop a library in connection with each church. A large library of good books was one of the indications of a good church.

This practice of maintaining Sunday School libraries extended even into the present century and the author can remember getting books to read from the Sunday School library in his early youth.

The letters reproduced in later pages refer frequently to the Temperance movement (item #7). They were written at a time when strong drink was sold as commonly as groceries and clothing, and usually in the same stores as those articles. The church was in the van in this social reform. One will find many references to the liquor traffic in the letters from the missionaries.

There were certain mannerisms which seem to have characterized much of this missionary correspondence. Because postage was determined by the number of "letter sheets" making up each letter, we find frequent abbreviations, thus condensing as much data in one letter as possible, and thereby reducing the amount of postage required. Some abbreviations are as follows: "chh" for "church"; "wh" for "which"; "sch" or "schl" for "schools". The symbol "&" is much more frequently found than "and."

Words which today we capitalize as proper nouns were often written as common nouns, such as "presbyterian," "christian," "baptist."

For the most part, judging from the letters available for study, the missionaries were well educated men, and probably all were graduates

of divinity schools. Their punctuation was not of a standard acceptable today, as dashes were usually employed in the place of commas and periods, and often to close paragraphs. The spelling, on the whole, is excellent, and the choice of words quite challenging to present day writers. Occasionally one finds a poor speller among them, but such a one is an exception.

On occasion the writer becomes eloquent, with frequent Biblical quotations and unusual figures of speech; others seem rather dull and uninspired. For the most part these early missionaries were most devout and consecrated men, and one cannot help but admire the sacrificial spirit which dominated them. One sees very little of pride or arrogance in their writings, but much of humility and self-denial. One is impressed, in these days of abundance, with the meager subsistence which was their portion, and the uncomplaining manner in which they spent their energies in promoting "the Kingdom." There was not the tolerance towards other denominations or religious faiths that is so evident today, but the consecration and devotion to their cause was so pronounced that they can be excused their occasional intolerant attitude. They were particularly outspoken in their opposition to the Universalist movement.

The physical hardships endured by these missionaries were unbelievably severe and arduous, measured by present day living. These men travelled their "fields of labour" either on foot or on horse back, as there were no roads for the most part, but mere forest trails where wild beasts and sometimes hostile Indians lurked. None of the comforts which we enjoy today were present. Log cabins for both home and church edifice, candles for illumination, fireplaces for heat, limited food variety, very few doctors. The ague, which we now recognize as a malaria, plagued the entire population, and epidemics often decimated the struggling communities. Rarely, however, did the missionary, or the

pioneer family, for that matter, complain of his lot. The manner in which these sturdy folk met and defeated their enemies, both spiritual and physical, makes very interesting and inspiring reading.

The men who served the American Home Missionary Society as Corresponding Secretary during this period, and to whom most of these letters were addressed, in the order of service appear to have been Absalom Peters, Milton Badger and Charles Hall.

Because of the postal markings on these letters many of them are illustrated. Occasionally a portion of the letter itself is shown, to prove some specific point or to illustrate the handwriting of the writer.

Consideration was given as to the order in which these letters should be arranged in this volume. They might have been reproduced in chronological order, or according to towns or churches involved. Over three score missionaries have authored the letters here shown, however, and it was considered that an alphabetical arrangement of the writers of the letters, regardless of dates, would be more practicable. That method, therefore, has been followed.

The name of this volume has been suggested by the reference in several of the letters to the fact that the missionaries were actually laboring in a wilderness, which accurately described most of Michigan at the time these men first came to our territory.

The criticism may be made that these letters are largely the same and that there is considerable repetition in the subject matter. While it is conceded that there is much repetition, yet it must be remembered that these are the letters of over sixty missionaries, laboring in different communities and faced

with varying problems, yet all motivated by the single desire to promote the Kingdom. It is only natural that they would discuss and make observations on the same general subjects, but each does it in his own peculiar and distinctive manner, so there is little monotony encountered in the reading of their reports.

One of the principal reasons for reproducing these letters, however, was to preserve, in printed form, some of the documents which go to make up the history of the state. These are actual, on-the-spot reports of intelligent and honest men, and of what they saw and did, and what they reported in the way of happenings of their day surely contributes to the early history of Michigan.

How fortunate we are that men like these worked side by side with the early settlers of our state, and helped give direction to life as it was lived in those rugged and formative years. Surely part of our heritage consists of the devotion, sacrifice and dedication of these pioneer preachers of a century and more ago.

Brief sketches of the authors of the letters are included. These are not intended to be complete biographies, but merely memoranda which may be helpful in better understanding the men whose letters we are reading. Nor is this work intended to be in any sense a history of the Presbyterian or Congregational churches in Michigan. It is merely a reproduction, in writing, of "Voices from the Wilderness," uttered over one hundred years ago at a time when Michigan was just growing up.

JAMES S. ALLAN

I am not at all certain that this first letter even belongs with those which follow. One need not necessarily be an ordained minister to be a missionary, however. In the truest sense of the word it would seem that the writer of this letter was a real missionary. I shall leave the reader to judge of that.

The letter here reproduced was written in 1849 by James S. Allan and mailed from Pontiac to Hon. Walter Lorrie at Mission House, New York. It refers to an opportunity offered Allan to work in a Chickasaw Indian Mission or station, probably in New York state, where the Chickasaw tribe was located. It would appear that Allan was not to go as the head of the station. In fact, he was not sure in what capacity he was expected to labor.

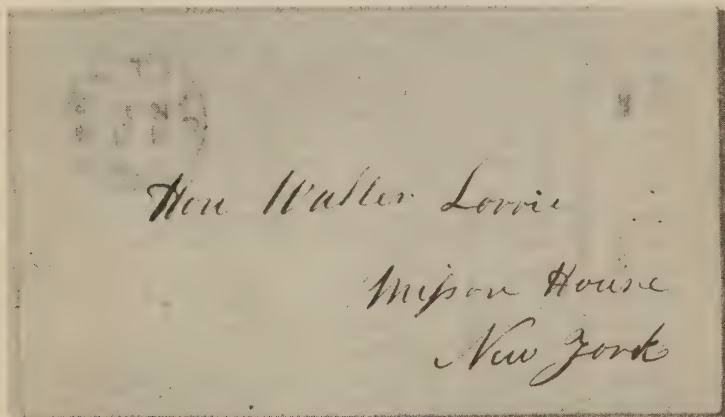
Such records as have been available for study do not disclose that Allan served any of the Pontiac churches in an official capacity. His poor spelling would indicate that he had not received the formal education which is reflected in most of the letters here reproduced. His strong preference for Princeton College for his son would suggest that he was Presbyterian by faith, although we do not find his name mentioned in any of the reports of the Pontiac Presbyterian Church.

The reference in his letter to his great friends, "my frutes and flowers," furnished the only help in the search for additional data concerning this man. Under the name of James Allen, and not James Allan, as he himself spells his surname, he is listed as an exhibitor in the Michigan Horicultural Society exhibition held in Detroit in the Fall of 1847. The record of exhibitors includes "James Allen, Pontiac; Twenty Ounce Pippin, Fall Pippin, Detroit Red, Spitzenburg, Rhode Island Greening, Cheeseboro

Russet, Golden Pippin and several other varieties of apples; French Jargonelle, Stevens Genesee and English Jargonelle pears." This grower of fruit in such variety is undoubtedly the author of the letter here shown.

Interestingly enough, Allan's fellow townsman, the Reverend Isaac Ruggles, several of whose letters appear later in this collection, exhibited "apples and quinces" in the same exhibition.

The letter is postmarked with the red circular handstamp used by Pontiac during the period and was dated June 29 (1849). The faint strike of the "10" rating mark shows the correct postage for a letter from Pontiac to New York in 1849.



Hon Walter Lorrie

Dear Sir I received your letter in due time. and all things considered I felt sattisfied. Now I am endeversing to sell of our chattls which will be done at some sacrifice, some wheat on the ground I must needs Harvest, and dispose of before I can lave, and that will necearrly take till some-time in Aug, before we shall be ready to start. I am must inclined towards the station among

Chickasaw for thair would be something to keep the mind in a state of excitment and would tend to make me forget my old frinds my frutes and flowers. which at preasant looks very pretty. You will be able by this time to say wether Mr. Boley will take charge of the Chickasaw Mission & if so I should like to know diffinetly what place I shall wander of too. With regard to the Property I shall sell it if I can and lodge the obligations in trust with our board of Forinign Missions, in case I cannot Sell. I will rent to the best advantage haveing the avalls running to our board, at the same time I will give the board a deed in trust with a power of attorney to sell, When oportunety may offer. The whole estate ought to bring twenty five or six Hundered dollars the interest of which would be sifficient to educate James. Wether in a short time I may be able to leese it to advantage I cannot say but shall do my best. We think James will leave this (place) about the same time that we do perhaps he will not be able to enter collage at that time in that case he must needs attend some Acedemy which I trust you will see to. Princeton Collage and no other will answer, and may be with your influence he might enter altho he has not read quite enough of Greek, from what information I can get respecting Princeton there is much temptretion to vice, and who will Daily watch over him. his room mate may be a wild fellow and might by his evil influence do him an everlasting injury this is takeing the worst view of the case, but I notice in order that you may interpose your influence so as to get him under the care of some one that will in particular watch over him and gaurd his morals. I have a quanty of carpenter tools, which I find to be a convenience and will take them with me unless you say nay. thay will weigh perhaps 150 lb.

Now my Dear sir Will you as soon as possible farther me what instrutions that may be needed and also what means are wanted to bare the expences to the place appointed I "long to have my pasport signed and be dismissed."

I wish you would not think about me takein charge of the Farm, I feel afraid that it would involve upon me an amount of boadly exercis which I do not feel competent for at this place, whare I am thoroughly my own master. I have ferquently thought of trading this place for a large farm, but have been oposed by my son and others on the ground that I should kill myself. it would be of little use to expose my self when I might be equally usefull in another avocation. Yet after all I should not suffer any domade (damage?) to accrue for the want eather of the help of my hands or my head. perhaps I have said enough at this time so good mornung & may Israls God be our God & redemor, and prospers us in our way and make us servesable in his casus (cause) whis is the prayer of your Humble Servent

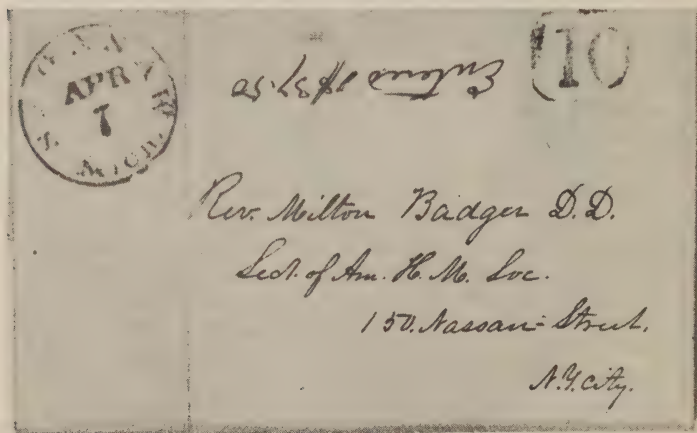
James. S. Allan

Pontiac 29th May
1849

C. H. BALDWIN

The Rev. C. H. Baldwin served the Presbyterian Church at Saginaw from January, 1846 to July, 1847. In the letter here reproduced, written on April 6, 1846, he tells of his impressions of Saginaw as he first found it, over one hundred years ago. The spelling, punctuation and sentence arrangement are exactly as we find them.

The letter, in the form of a folded letter-sheet, was postmarked on April 7, (1846) at SAGANAW, which was the spelling given this village in its early days. In 1846 the postage rate for a single letter sheet for distances in excess of three hundred miles was ten cents, hence the rate '10' shown on the letter from the Rev. Mr. Baldwin which we illustrate.



Saginaw City/Mich/ April 6. 1846

Milton Badger, D.D.

Rev. & Dear Sir,

I have made no "statistical report" for the first of April. My reason is a good one. Not having been here over one quarter, I could give no satisfactory answers, to any of the interroga-

tories. This report was due on the first, but as our Communion Season occurred on the first Sabbath, I chose not to report, till after that event.—My commission is dated, Jan'y 16th & contains a clause, setting forth that it is to begin, on an even date, with my beginning labor, under it. This clause, I infer, is not common, & was induced by my writing Dr. Badger, stating my embarrassment, arising from the delay, in answering the application, & my reluctance, to accept, or reject, the call. The impression was, probably, made, that I would not remove, till after I should receive definite information. —This, however, was not the case. I had settled in Saginaw, before I received your communication, trusting, that I should get aid; or if I did not, I was sensible the place ought to be occupied; & concluded to trust in God for my support. My labors with the church, are dated from the first of Jan'y. Hence, unless you decide otherwise, I shall understand the commission as going back to that date. —I should like to receive the "Missionary Herald," if it is ever sent to your Missionaries ... There are so few to take part in our evening meetings, that I must have much information to communicate, to make them really interesting.

My Field as I found it—Saginaw river abounds in fish, which affords quite an article of trade & exportation. This business brings in a class of persons, who, generally, are characterized, by profanity - Sabbath-breaking & great looseness of morals. This is also the central point of the fur trade, for eastern & northern Mich. There is a large number of Indians, on all sides of us. The fur trade brings Whites & Indians together. The Whites have depraved the Indians, by intemperance & the Indians, by vile commerce, have depraved the Whites. This, of course, is not universal, but its influence is seen on all sides.—There has been no minister here for two years. There has been an occasional sermon by a Methodist. There has been no Sabbath School—no stated prayer meeting—indeed—no regular means of grace, for the same time. There were eight stores, taverns & groggeries, where liquor was sold, to gratify &

make drunkards. The Indian trade does much to support these. There was a dancing & a district school, both in a flourishing condition, I believe. The church had eleven members, only three males & one of them four miles from the village. My field is not confined to Saginaw City, taking it as a centre, it extends 25 miles west, 16 north & 10 south. In all this field I am the only minister of any denomination. A catholic Priest comes once or twice a year.

Signs of Promise Intemperance is decreasing. One drunkery is gone down. One, & a "hard one" is in the way of "closing up." One drunkard reclaimed and promises well. —The people are beginning to regard the Sabbath. I am told, that formerly, when Spring hunting time came on, the discharge of guns was incessant. On that day, every gun was expected "to do his duty," & he did it. This spring there is very little of it. The Congregation is nearly double what it was, two years ago—though the number of inhabitants is about the same. The interest & attention are, also, very encouraging. —Universalism etc with which, many have been solacing themselves, begin to yield before truth & trial. Sight, but incidentally disclosed, their own hearts construe to the overthrow of their own false principles. —Already has the converting grace of God been poured out upon us, & there are rejoicings of hope in Christ, & a reviving of things that had well nigh perished. At our late communion season, there were seven added to the church, by letter & profession, the first that have been added for the last three years. There are others whom we hope soon to gather into the fold. I have visited nearly all the families in this vicinity, leaving them with tracts & books—good seed—we are looking for the fruit, though we are still digging & pruning, "that they may bring forth more fruit." —Within the last eight weeks, I have attended six funerals. I went 25 miles, much of the way on an Indian trail, to attend one. That was, indeed, on the extreme outgoings of civilization. Two others, 16 miles north, all the way through the woods, on a trail. Two others, 10 miles south,

one of whom was a precious "Mother in Israel."
If I thought your Soc. could give aid, I would
form three churches within my field, which would
require two ministers. I can now but glance, over
the whole field. I cannot turn up the foundations,
at any of the points. But I will toil on, all
alone, gathering in all of the "truly great"
harvest, that I may be able, with the hope that
when my work is done, it may be said to be "well
done" —As to the sermon & collection in behalf
of your Soc. I wish to state, that the church and
people have done all they could to sustain me—
they are not able to do more. Is it best then
this year to make the trial? If you will waive
it, please write me. If not, not.

I remain

Truly yours

C. H. Baldwin

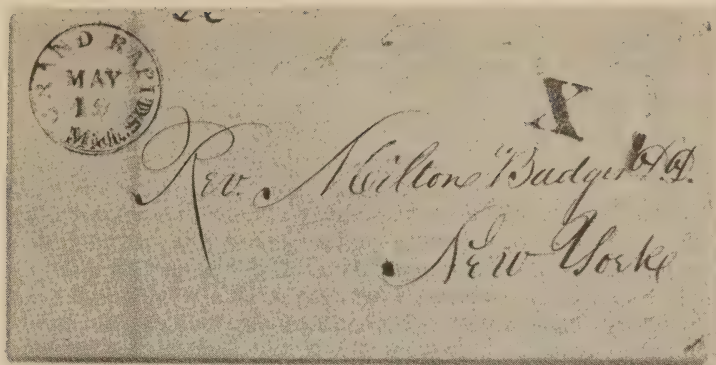
JAMES BALLARD
ADDISON BALLARD

One of the Congregational ministers to come to Michigan in the early days was the Rev. James Ballard, of Charlemont, Mass. We have no complete letter from this minister, but he adds his approval to the letter here reproduced in a brief notation at the bottom, which he has signed. There is a record of Ballard having been in Yankee Springs, Barry County, as early as 1841. There is also available for study a letter which Lucius Lyon, a prominent public official in early Michigan days, addressed to Ballard in Massachusetts in 1842, telling him of the prospects afforded in the Grand River valley. A Rev. James Ballard also officiated at a prominent wedding in Grand Rapids in 1838.

This discrepancy in dates may be the result of faulty memory on the part of some of the chroniclers of those early events. The documentary evidence consists of the Lyons letter here reproduced, a postscript to which is signed by Ballard. One historian states that Ballard, who was preaching at nearby Grandville, was called to the Grand Rapids church in 1838, and served that congregation until 1848.

The letter here shown is in regard to the Rev. Addison Ballard. If he was related to James Ballard it does not appear from available records. The Rev. Addison Ballard, who was also a New Englander, is mentioned as having been in Grand Rapids as early as 1845. In any event the people of the now-extinct village of Plainfield desired his services. Addison Ballard began preaching in the First Congregational Church in Detroit in 1866, and continued there as the regular pastor until 1872.

This letter, although written at Plainfield, was posted at Grand Rapids and bears the black circular handstamp of that post office, under date of May 19 (1847).



Plainfield, April 11th, 1847

Sirs, Wishing to receive help from the Home Missionary Society for the support of Rev. Addison Ballard to preach the Gospel in the town of Plainfield Kent Co Michigan I will briefly state the condition of this vicinity. It is a newly settled portion of the state and the people generally poor and the country is fast settling with a mixed population who appear to be anxious & willing to hear the Gospel of Christ declared to them. There is a vast field of labor here, extensive enough to require many laborers. The field which Brother Ballard has occupied for a few weeks past and in which we wish to continue his labors for the coming year consists of a territory six miles by twelve and fast settling and we have had no regular preaching for the past year. Since the first of February Brothers J. Ballard of Grand Rapids & Barker of Cortland have held a series of meetings in this place which have resulted in much good and there is now a Congregational Church formed of thirteen members and four propounded for admission next communion. The people are well pleased with Rev. A. Ballard as a Pastor & we think no other person is calculated to do the good he can, especially among the youth for his godly examples during the week as well as his talents & entreaties on the Sabbath through the blessing of God cannot fail to do good. If consistent with the Board of Home Missions we

should like to receive the sum of two hundred dollars for the coming year and this church will raise as much as is in our power but our means are very small.

Yours in Christian Fellowship,

Russel L. Blakeley

P.S. May it please the Board I would further add that there is no other minister or preaching within the territory aforesaid nor has there been any preaching since last July until Brother Ballard came here. The nearest preaching is not within seven miles the field Brother Barker now occupies. Brother Ballards labors will be very arduous if he remains here; still I think he appears to be willing to do all he can for the souls of his fellowmen.

Russel L. Blakeley,
Clerk of Church

(Added on next page is following)

Cortland, May 11th, 1847

Dear Brethren the foregoing application meets my most cordial approbation and in my view the field of labour, and the laborour invited, all very fitly adapted to each other Between his preaching places and mine is a distance from 7 to 10 miles Brother Blakeley should have said that there is Methodist preaching once in four weeks, five miles from this place.

Isaac Barker.

I heartily concur in the foregoing statement.

James Ballard

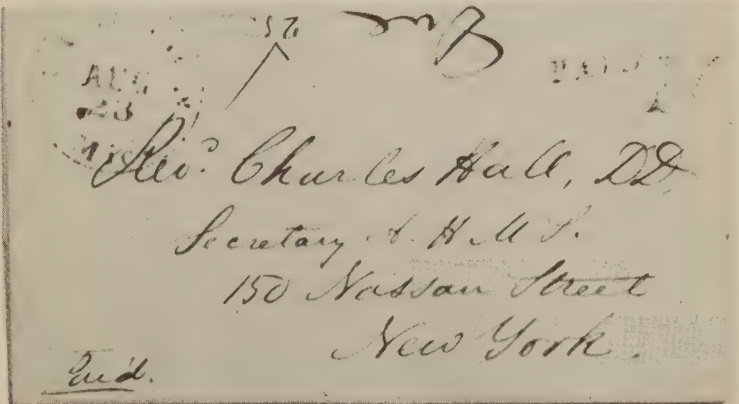
Grand Rapids

May 19, 1847

JOHN W. BAYNES

The Rev. John W. Baynes served several churches in Lenawee County over a period of many years. He served as early as 1850 in the Hudson Congregational church, which was first organized as the Presbyterian Church of Bean Creek. In 1841 the form of organization was changed to Congregational, although this church remained in the Monroe Presbytery until 1851. In 1854 Baynes was pastor of the Manchester Presbyterian Church. Beginning in 1858 and continuing for about two years thereafter, the Rev. Mr. Baynes preached three times each Sunday, at Blissfield, Deerfield and Petersburg. Later he served the Blissfield church as a supply and was its regular pastor for about one year in 1870-1871.

The letter carries the circular handstamp of the Hudson post office, in blue, under date of Aug. 23 (1850).



Hudson, Michigan
August 22, 1850

Rev'd Charles Hall, D.D.

Dear Sir,

Having received the renewal of the Home Missionary Society's commission to labour in this field, I beg leave to submit my

quarterly report. During the last quarter, although I have been much afflicted by the sickness of every member of my family, yet I myself have been mercifully preserved in health, and I have fulfilled every appointment, with but one or two exceptions in reference to meetings of a social character. At the last communion season in July seven persons were admitted to the fellowship of the church—two of whom on profession and the remaining five by letter. These additions to the membership, however, as most of the previous ones which I have reported, were the ordinary congregation, and not recently from other churches. The Rev'd Calvin Clark spent a Sabbath here in June last, presenting the claims of the A.H.M.S., and taking up a contribution for the same, amounting to \$6.37 $\frac{1}{2}$ which he took with him on leaving.

With Christian regards,
I remain

Yours faithfully,

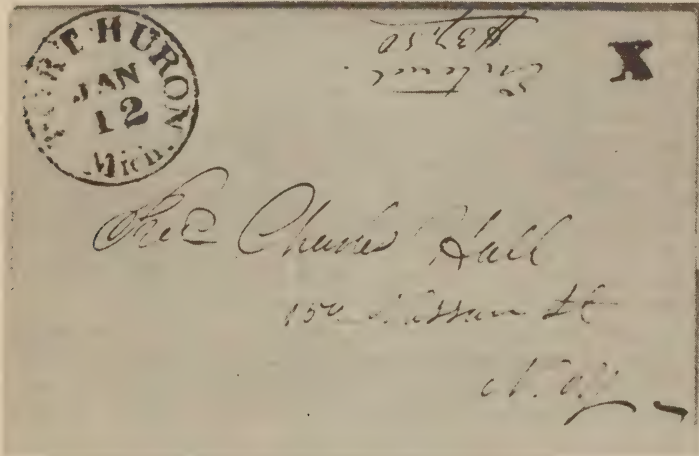
J. W. Baynes

PETER BOUGHTON

The Rev. Peter Boughton came to Michigan in territorial days, and was the pastor of the first church to be organized in Augusta Township, Washtenaw County, just south of Ypsilanti. This was the Presbyterian Church and two years later, in 1835, a church edifice was completed, with Boughton preaching the dedicatory sermon.

In January of 1844 Rev. Boughton took over the Presbyterian Church at Port Huron, the form of organization having been changed to Congregational just prior to his arrival. He served this congregation for six years, leaving in the fall of 1850.

Boughton's letter here reproduced is hand-stamped with the black circular marking of Port Huron, dated Jan. 12 (1846).



Port Huron St Clair Co Mich Jan 7, 1846

Dear Brethren.

The time has arrived for my quarterly report & I have not much of interest to communicate—We are subject in frontier towns like this to many

changes, which have alternately an encouraging & discouraging influence upon us—We are continually dismissing from our small number, but at every communion receiving others, so that on the whole our numbers are on the increase—On the last Sabbath 8 were received into the Church, 4 on profession & 4 by letter—It was a day of much interest, solemnity & rejoicing—Christians felt that God was present by his spirit, & working by a silent, heavenly influence upon many hearts—tears were shed by the impenitent, the faith of God's people was strengthened & their hearts encouraged—We hope & pray that the cloud of mercy which seems to be hanging over us, may burst in blessings upon this entire community—upon the church of Christ & upon those who have hitherto withheld their hearts from God & violated his commands—Our indefatigable & much loved brother, Rev'd Calvin Clark, the agent of the A.H.M.S. for this state, has made us a flying visit & preached twice, with his characteristic zeal & pathos, & we trust that souls will be given him as his reward—We bless God for the visit, & I shall be pardoned for remarking, that if those who are denominated Bishops Diocesan, in their town of visitation, would do as much towards confirming the churches, strengthening the faith & encouraging the hearts of the Pastors, as he does, multitudes more than now do, would hail them as ambassadors of Christ—One of the young men of our Church recently departed this life to join the Church above—His death was a most triumphant one & has left a salutary impression upon many minds—One of his sisters has since his departure, hopefully passed from death unto life & has united with the Church—A few hours before his death he conversed with all the members of his family in a most solemn & interesting manner, especially with his father, who is not a professor—His last words were as follows—Father will you look & see if day appears—At daylight I shall die, & at sunrise I shall be singing the song of Moses & the Lamb—At 4½ the Spirit was released from the earthly tabernacle & took its flight, we have no doubt to the Paradise above—He was very soon to have been married to an amiable & pious female

—but the wedding garments were exchanged for
badges of mourning & the habiliments of the grave—

The first quarter of the present year of my
labors commencing the first of Oct 1845 ends on
the last day of Dec & there is now due me from
the board \$37-50 cts—which you may if you please
remit to me—

Your Ob't Serv't

P. Boughton

ERASMUS J. BOYD

The Rev. Erasmus J. Boyd was born in Ostego County, New York, in 1814. After graduation from Hamilton College and New York Theological Seminary he came to Michigan under a commission from the American Home Missionary Society. It would appear from the letter from the Session of the church at Brooklyn that Rev. Boyd came to that church in 1841, and although he worked with that congregation for several years he was not actually called as their pastor until late in 1845.

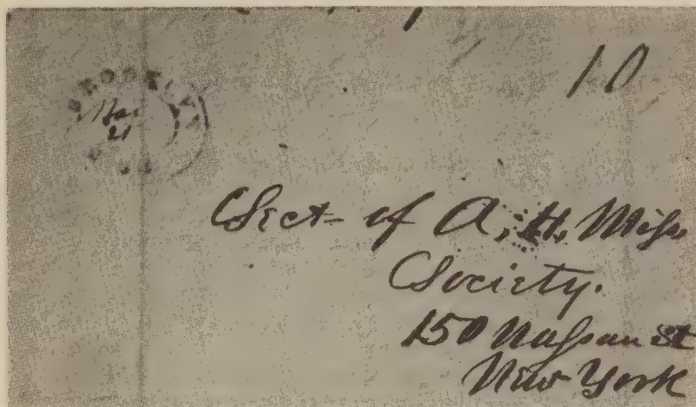
In 1849 Mr. Boyd removed to Monroe and organized The Monroe Young Ladies' Seminary, a very successful educational institution, where he remained for almost thirty years. He then accepted a pastorate in Laramie City, Wyoming Territory, where he died in 1881. His remains were returned to Monroe, and his grave there is marked by a monument erected in his memory by his former students.

A biographer says of Mr. Boyd that "he was a man of high culture, a successful educator, and an able preacher."

We reproduce two letters bearing on the Michigan ministry of this preacher-teacher. One letter is signed by the Session of the Brooklyn Presbyterian Church, with a note of approval from a committee of the Marshall Presbytery. The second letter is from Mr. Boyd himself, written shortly before his removal to Monroe.

The letter from the Session of the Brooklyn church, although datelined at Brooklyn, was actually posted at Hillsdale, and bears the blue handstamp of that post office, dated Dec. 12 (1845).

Boyd's letter was postmarked at Brooklyn with the rare and unique double-oval marking of that office. It is in red, and is dated March 25, 1848.



Brooklyn March 15th, 1848

Dear Secretaries

Within I send you my Quarterly & Annual Report. I thank you much for your renewal commission, & kind regards & wish I could say more that was encouraging in regard to Religious matters. Though we have had some mercy drops a few hopeful conversions, and more interest among Christians, a fuller & More serious congregation on the Sabbath, I have had a bible class of some 20 members, or more of great interest, never have I seen young people manifest more diligence & interest in the study of the bible some of them coming over 4 miles to attend. I bestow on it much labour & time & hope soon to see the good fruits of all the cultivation in the conversion of them all to God & the engagement to a great degree of the piety of those that are already Christians, I look to it with great hopes it is continually increasing in numbers & interest. At our last communion we received on examination 5 members to the church 2 heads of families, & expect at the next to receive some more & several on letter. God has recently sent us some that will be of great benefit to us in a temporal &

spiritual point (?), if we derive from them all we anticipate, from thru reputation in former places of residence, Our Sabbath School is as flourishing as I have ever seen it in the winter, I send you below my Annual Report from March, to March 1848.

(There follows detailed report on members, etc.)

I should have hoped to give you a larger no. united with our church by letter, if my report could have been deferred until next communion, as several have recently informed me that they have now got their letters. Of the \$31.00 here reported you will please, give me credit for the amount & send me a draft for the balance, which—I think will be \$19.00 up to March 1848, & of the \$51. you will please by the vote of the church make Guy I. Chapman a life member—of your Society, & Besides the life members you now send the Home Missionary to (myself & H. Austin directed to Norvill). Please send it to the following persons Brooklyn P.O. G.I. Chapman, life member, A. G. Irwin, R. Hart, I. A. White, W. H. Brach (Brock). Some of the above mentioned persons you are now sending the H. Missionary to, by virtue of our contribution, Please send them as above named for the coming year.

I regret an inability to do more for your Society this year I had expected to have brought up our contributors this year to \$40 But our failure in the wheat crop is the great reason, & several of our most liberal supporters to H. Missions have not been present, or at home when we made special efforts for your cause. They gave in other places.

Praying God's blessing to rest on your noble cause, & asking an interest in your prayers,

I remain as ever

Yours, E. J. Boyd

SECRETARIES OF A. H.
MISSIONARY SOCIETY

NO 150 MADISON ST
NEW YORK

Brooklyn Mich Nov 29th—1845

Secretaries of the A.H.M. Society

Dear Sirs

We are under the necessity of presenting ourselves before the Executive Committee of your Society again asking aid to the amount of the past year to enable us to sustain the preached Gospel in our midst in connection with the labours of Rev. Mr. Boyd.

Though the Lord has blest us with an abundant harvest, So greatly were our crops cut off last year & so much had we to do in erecting a new Church edifice which has just been completed, & dedicated to Almighty God—in paying up the arrears of the Society debts in the support of the Gospel, and in sustaining the many other benevolent objects always connected with the building up of a church in an new country, that we find ourselves unable to raise higher subscriptions this year than we did last. And this we think you will not be surprised at when we tell you what we have done & have got to do this year. We have built a house of worship costing \$2000 the seats of which have sold for a sufficient sum to cover the whole

expense so that the indebtedness of the Society rests not on us in our body corporate but on individual members, & but few of them owe largely towards their seats we have paid & engaged to pay for the year some \$75 for the maintaining of singing, & the leading of the Choier on the Sabbath to an experienced teacher of sacred music, we have raised some \$25, for Foreign & Home Missions & must this year make up an arrearage of some forty dollars on Mr Boyds salary of last year Mr Boyd kindly releasing us from paying the \$25. this year remaining unprovided for on account of our obtaining only \$125 from your society instead of \$150. thus making his salary for the past year but \$375., & that but a small portion of it in cash, Mr. Boyd considering what we have had to do for the last year, & have for the Year to come asks of us but \$375 dollars 250 of this we can by great exertion raise. And if we can obtain 125 dollars from your society we shall be able to obtain him for another year. We wish we were able to release Your Society from the burden of any donation, but it is out of our power, for all we can possibly do at present we have done. we are each year becoming more able, & we trust a stable & perminant Church. the additions to our members of the year past have not increased our pecuniary ability to any amt. We are, we hope grateful to God for what He has done for us. For we can truely say "the Lord has led us by a way which we knew not, & blessed be his name." 7 years ago a few of us were scattered over these plains without an Organized Church, without the preached Gospel without a minister, without a house of worship. At that time a Church was formed of 13 members & soon after that time it pleased the Lord to send us a Pastor, whose labors were blest to the up-building of this Church & people but the Lord soon called him home to receive the reward of his labor.

For the last four years we owe to your beneficence the blessing of God which we are permitted to enjoy from time, to time, through the labors of Brother Boyd for which we are truly Grateful, & without which we should have been compelled to abandon our much beloved object. the

sustaining of the Gospel & Ordinances of Christ's house in our midst, as the result of your assistance we have been led along until we now have the preached word, a neat & commodious house of worship, schools & many other of the blessings of older countries, & we trust & pray that the Lord will bless more & more & pour upon us a revival spirit which we & all this community greatly need. Our Congregations are on the increase & have received great additions since we entered our new house of Worship, & will we are persuaded increase more & more. If we can obtain help one or two years more at most, we shall with our present prospect be able to support the Gospel alone. Though we ask your assistance to the amount of \$125 to aid us in sustaining Mr. Boyd as our minister, we have evident reason judging from the past that your appropriation will be greatly instrumental in building up the Kingdom of Christ in a place which is the center of influence in a rich, & growing country, & the second place in the county. We Thank you for the past, & praying God for a blessing to rest on your institution we remain in the Words of the gospel

Yours as ever

Names of the Session
of Presbyterian Church

Harvey Austin
Andrew G. Irwin
Reuben Hart

* * * * *

Marshall 9th Dec. 1845

We fully approve the within application, and are gratified to add that, in expectation of aid from your Society, the church at Brooklyn have just given Rev, Mr. Boyd a call to become their Pastor—which he has accepted—& his installation is appointed for Jan'y next.

Sam'l H. Hall)
Alexander Trotter)
Henry H. Northrop)

Com. of Marshall
Presbytery on Home
Missions

ANSEL BRIDGMAN

The successor to the Rev. Erie Prince in the Farmington Presbyterian Church was the Rev. Ansel Bridgman. He reached Michigan Territory in the month of October of 1830, apparently uncertain as to just where he would serve as missionary. Upon his arrival in Detroit he conferred with Mr. Eurotas P. Hastings, president of the Bank of Michigan and a prominent layman. Hastings was a member of a committee having a somewhat indefinite responsibility for the Presbyterian missionary effort in Michigan. The "Mr. Wells" referred to in the following letter was the Rev. Noah M. Wells, under whom the First Protestant Society organized by the Rev. John Montieth became the First Presbyterian Society, which we know today as the First Presbyterian Church of Detroit.

Bridgman followed the suggestion of Mr. Hastings and located in Farmington, taking over the field that had been "abandoned," as he later reports, by the Rev. Erie Prince. Bridgman served in the Farmington, Plymouth, Northville and Southfield churches when those communities were in their infancy.

The letter which we reproduce here was written by Bridgman the month after his arrival in Michigan Territory. Although datelined at Farmington, it was mailed at the post office of Borodino, a community located halfway between the towns of Bucklin, now Dearborn, and Dixboro, and now extinct. The other two letters from this early missionary bear the manuscript markings of territorial Farmington, and all three letters are rare philatelic items.

Farmington Oakland Co. M.T. Nov. 11, 1830

To the Cor. Sec. of the A.H.M.S.

Rev. & dear Sir.

I write to inform you where I am located, and what are my prospects of becoming useful as a Missionary in this vicinity. I entered the Ter.

Bowdoin M^{rs}
Dec 1st

23

Rev Absalom Peter
Cor. Sec. of the A.H.M.S.
144 Nassau St
City of New York

the first of Oct.—called upon Mr. Hastings, of Detroit, one of the committee of Ch, Mr. Wells, the other was absent.

I consulted with Mr. H. on the subject of location—he directed me to Farmington and Plymouth, the former town lying in Oakland Co. the latter in Wayne. The Rev. Mr. Prince one of your missionaries in this Ter. has formerly laboured in both towns. Owing to difficulties between him & the people in Farmington he abandoned that place last spring, but has continued to preach in Plymouth every other Sabbath up to the middle of Oct. He agreed however and expressed to the people of both towns a willingness to resign his station in P. provided a minister be sent in whom both societies would be united in his support.

The people have expressed to the Com. of Cor. in Detroit a wish that a missionary be sent among them. According to the direction of Mr. Hastings I have visited both towns—have preached at different places in each town & visited many of the families.

They have signified to me a wish that I labour among them, & have engaged to do all they are able towards my support. There is a church

in each town. That in Plymouth is Presbyterian & that in F. is on congregational plan.—about 20 members in each. The number of inhabitants who are disposed to support the Gospel is small. They feel themselves poor & they are so, as far as pecuniary means are concerned. But they appear very anxious to enjoy the blessings of the preached word. Although they can do but little at present to its support they say, they are confident that in two or three years, they shall not only be able to support a minister in full but will be able to contribute towards the support of other societies in their infant state.

They expect & will doubtless realise in course of the coming year very important and valuable acquisitions, from emigrants who have recently purchased in their towns—important both in relation to their influence in building up society and supporting the Gospel among them.

There are also many coming in who are infidels and sectarians and are exerting great influence in the spread of error and immorality. The state of society in this vicinity is in a critical situation in regard to their religious character. One effort now to establish good moral and religious habits will be worth ten, two or three years hence, if the means are neglected till then. The church in F. is in quite a disorganized state, & it appears that unless something is done soon to build it up it will become extinct.

My labours thus far have consisted principally in visiting from house to house. I preach on the Sabbath & hold conferences when practicable—people come from four to six miles to hear the Gospel dispensed. I am unable to say how much salary can be raised for my support—probably it will not exceed \$150. or \$200 at most.

Sabbath schools have existed in this vicinity during the past season, tho not so extensively nor so profitably as they might. Little or nothing can further be done in their behalf until next Spring. A Bible class is in contemplation and

other institutions designed for moral and religious improvement.

The monthly concert for prayer has been neglected--we had one the first Monday in this month--it was interesting & solemn. There are a few fathers and mothers in this wilderness land who not only feel, but feel deeply for the prosperity of Zion.

There is a Tract Soc. in the town of Farmington recently organized--commenced its operation this week. The prospect is that much good will arise from it. Efforts will soon be made to do something in relation to Bible & other societies for the promotion of Christian benevolence.

The field of my labours is extensive--there are--1,500 inhabitants in both towns--but few among them who call upon the name of the Lord, or pay any regard to religion. The trials of a faithful missionary are great,--sometimes they appear almost overwhelming. But the cause in which they are engaged, I feel to be good one, and am willing to spend & be spent for its promotion.

In my next I hope to give a more particular account of the religious state of things,--prospects of usefulness, etc, etc.

I have been taking the Home Missionary & Pastors Journal. I wish to receive it here.
Farmington Oakland Co. M T

Yours in Christian affection

Ansel Bridgman

Rev. Absalom Peters.

Farmington, Oakland Co., Mich. Ter. Feb. 14th, 1831

To the Cor. Sec. of the A.H.M.S.

Rev'd and dear Sir:

Three months have elapsed since the date of my last report. During the interval my labours have been confined to Farmington and Plymouth except about three weeks which I spent in visiting and preaching in the destitute parts of Oakland and Macomb counties.

We had an interesting communion season the last Sabbath but one in Nov. in the town of Farmington. Two persons united with the church at the time—were rec'd on examination. On the following Sabbath the Sacrament of the Last Supper was administered to the church in Plymouth. One was taken in to her communion on examination. He is a decidedly pious & devoted old gentleman—has advanced in life thro. 78 yrs. and he walks, to attend meeting on the Sabbath, eight miles. He is so deaf however that he can hear but very little of a discourse even when it is delivered unusually loud. He was asked what satisfaction it could be to him to attend meeting, since he could hear so imperfectly? He replied that he loved to be among christians and that it seemed good to see others engaged in worshipping God, tho he could not hear.

There is only one Sabbath School in operation in this vicinity during the winter. That, which is in Farmington, is in a flourishing condition. It embraces 25 scholars who are regular attendants. Common schools are generally prosperous. We have no Bible Class at present—one is in contemplation. We have a Tract Soc. in very successful operation. It is conducted on the plan of monthly distribution. Tracts are in the majority of cases gratefully received. In many instances however they are not. Sometimes, when left in families, they are committed to the flames or given to little children who give much satisfaction to their parents by tearing them in pieces.

The Auxiliary Bible Soc. of Oakland Co. met a few days since, at which time a committee was

appointed from this town, to explore it & ascertain how many families are destitute of Bibles, and of furnishing the destitute with the Bread of Life.

We have a Temperance Soc. covering the towns of Farmington and Plymouth. The Soc. met today—The house was crowded—addresses were delivered on the occasion—much interest was excited. Sixteen subscribed to our constitution at the time, which increased the former numbers to sixty two. The Soc. is manifestly diffusing a salutary influence over the community. It however meets with much opposition. Not only confirmed drunkards, but many who are considered temperate, and who hold important offices of trust and even some professors of religion, are both opposed to Tem. Soc. and do & are determined to view them in no other light as political movements aiming directly at monarchy and a union of civil and ecclesiastical power, which will unavoidably be consequent to the triumph of the cause.

In the towns of Farmington & Plymouth which embrace a population of about 2000, one to every nine or ten of the Freeholders are finished drunkards, as many more are travelling the highway to the drunkards scene of cancer, & soon as they reach that, what can save them from the drunkards grave?

Sabbath breaking and profaneness as well as Intemperance are crying sins among us. Multitudes here seem to act on the principle of belief, that they are removed from the notice of God's eye—that they can safely play the part of the veriest fiend,—can "draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope," without being caught.

A dark cloud hangs over this part of Zion. But hear and there is discovered a brilliant star, which tells us that there is a firmament above us, and that we may hope ere long to behold the sun passing thru it in all its splendour. Some glimmerings of a dawn are seen in different parts of the Ter. The great object of emigration into this country is the accumulation of wealth, consequently few are found even among professors

of religion who appear to feel much interest in the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom at large or of true piety among themselves. While we are encouraged and delighted with the inquiry, "What shall I do to be saved?"—the loud cry of the great mass, is What shall I do to get property? O that they would consider that they have precious immortal souls, & might be led by the spirit of God to seek and obtain durable niches in the skies!

I have rec'd a commission the A.S.S.U. which informs me of an appointment by the Manager of that Institution, to labour as a missionary in this vicinity, in the promotion of the objects which it contemplates. I shall do what I can consistently with other labours assigned me.

Yours respectfully Ansel Bridgman
Missionary at Farmington and Plymouth
Mich. Ter. Feb, 14, 1831

Rev. A. Peters
Cor. Sec. of the A.H.M.S.

P.S. I wish soon to draw from your soc. \$75 to meet some demands against me in Mass. I shall send an order for that amount to some merchants in Northampton, Mas. who will present the same to you for the money. This I believe will be correct.

A.B.

* * * *

Farmington Mich. Tery March 27th, 1832

Cor. Sec'y of the AHMS.

Dear Sir:

It was not till within a few days since that I rec'd my Commission for the current year. Of course, I have necessarily failed to report at an earlier date.

This will embrace a quartily report and the semi-annual schedule required in my instructions.

My labours are this year one half the time in Farmington, the same as last year, the other half the time in Southfield, a town joining Farmington on the East, six miles square. Untill eight years ago next month there was not a family of white people in the town—the ground was occupied only by the Indian and the wild beasts of the forests. There are now one hundred and one families, the number of inhabitants between five & six hundred. I called upon each family a few weeks since to ascertain how extensively the Bible was possessed. I found 21 families destitute of a copy. They will be directly supplied. The people are generally very industrious and enterprizing. But the "Mamman of unrighteousness" is the grand object of pursuit by most of the people.

There is much of irreligion, false doctrine, Sabbath breaking, Intemperance & profaneness in the town. In one part of the town, in a circle whose diameter does not exceed a mile may be found 15 or 16 families at the head of which all the male members, save one are Universalists or infidels,—and very active in promoting their liberal principles of religion, as they term it, and are loud in their opposition to orthodox religion and to the exertions of her friends. Females in a majority of cases coincide in religious belief with their companions in error.

The great mass of people want nothing to do with preaching and societies. They cant bear the name of them. "Down with the priesthood & Society men," they cry, "it is all priestcraft and intrigue—a plot to gain money & power."

There are a few active praying souls in Southfield who mourn over the desolations of Zion, and are pained at heart to witness the extent to which error and delusion are abounding and sigh at the loss of those religious privileges which they once enjoyed at the East. But there are many professors formerly who are dead on the subject of religion, yea twice dead and plucked up by the roots, who do not wish to be connected with a church, but appear glad that they are free from her restraints, with which they once felt themselves

- - - -(?). They feel no interest in, or are unfriendly to the benevolent Institutions of the times. They are obstacles in the sinners path to prevent entering the road that leads to life. They will not enter heaven themselves neither suffer others to enter therein. When sin abounds the Lord can make grace much more to abound. We are confident he will bless his own appointed means, and will raise up a seed to serve him. Eight or ten in the course of the last Fall and winter have renounced the way of sin and folly, and are uniting themselves with the people of God. We have a small church formed last Oct. consisting of thirteen members--is on the congregational plan. I preach at three different places in this town regularly;- at 5 places occasionally. Congregations are necessarily small. But many more hear the word of life dispensed than if preaching were in only one or two places. Those who attend give a good degree of attention. Some would not attend were the meetings held before their doors in the streets,-- they rather hunt and labour on the Sabbath.

Sabbath Schools are unknown at present in this town. Two or three will be formed the coming season. There have been three week day schools the past winter--will be four in the summer.

A Temperance Soc. was formed about a year ago. At first it met with unaccountable opposition--no small part of it from professors of religion. The Society meets once in three months, when addresses are delivered on the occasion. It has increased from half a dozen members, all that could be obtained at first, to 60 or 70.

We have lately commenced the operation of a Tract Society on the plan of monthly distribution. It also meets with much opposition. Some laugh at the cause and ridicule the "deluded people" who circulate these herald of salvation. Others maliciously destroy them. A Tract, a few days since was left in the hands of a little girl in the absence of her father. She was much pleased with it. The return of her father was hailed by her with much joy. --she hastened to present to him the treasure, she so highly valued, saying

smilingly, "Father see the new book the man gave us."

He took it and observing what the title was, instantly threw it into the fire, at the same time bidding his family in threatening language never to take another one.

People in this town are generally in very low pecuniary circumstances, especially those who are disposed to give anything for the support of the gospel. Very little indeed is given for this purpose. They say their families must be taken care of. It is (a) hard thing to move people in this new country to acts of much self denial & charity in the cause of religion. A Thick cloud of selfishness and prejudice surrounds the mind. It is difficult to remove it and get their eyes open to see and notice the events of a world lying in wickedness.

There has been some unusual religious excitement in the town of Farmington during the past winter. About twenty have expressed a hope in the pardoning mercy of God. Four were taken into the church last communion, others will come forward soon. The great cause of religion and humanity is gradually advancing in this town. An increasing interest is felt in the grand and benevolent objects of the day, among Christians. They feel the importance of action bold and decided that their country and immortal souls may be saved from ruin. Bible Sabbath Schools, Tracts & temp. Societies flourish as could reasonably be expected in the infancy of the settlement. We are not blessed with such extensive revivals of religion as are the people at the East, yet the Lord has not forgotten nor forsaken this land. In several places in the Territory he is visiting the inhabitants with gentle showers of renewing grace. Protracted meetings have been held in several places recently and have been signally favoured by the presence of the Holy Spirit. One such meeting is now in progress in Detroit & has been continued already more than two weeks—glorious things for Zion are resulting from it. Hardened, wicked Detroit has never witnessed such a time. Blessed be God for what he is doing among that people.

The monthly concert is regularly observed in Farmington and Southfield, also prayer meetings in each town generally two evenings in a week. A church meeting is held once a month for the spiritual improvements of the members, by conversing on religion and devising means to promote the best spiritual welfare of each other and the cause of piety generally. Such meetings are found to be very profitable.

From labours and exposures undergone of late, my health is quite feeble this spring, tho not as yet so as to fail to perform the usual duties of my station.

Yours, etc Ansel Bridgman

Mis'y at Farmington & Southfield M.T.

(Then follows a chart showing membership and other statistical detail)

ELIAS CHILD

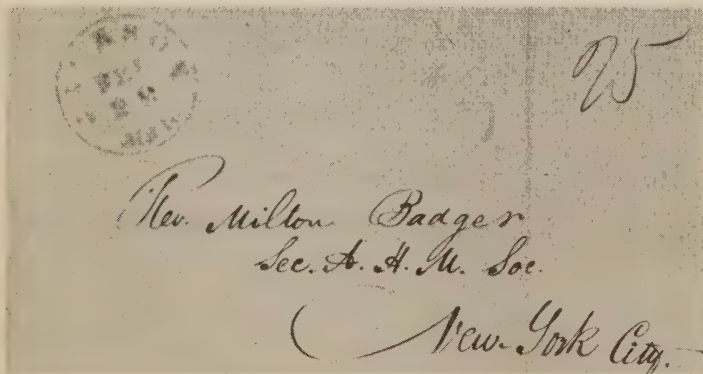
Very little biographical data is available relative to the Rev. Elias Child, although it would appear that he spent over fifty years in Michigan. From the letter regarding his ministry which we reproduce here, it appears that he was the minister in the Presbyterian Church in Concord, beginning in the autumn of 1838. He also served the Presbyterian Church at Jonesville from 1862 to 1873, and again for a period beginning in 1874.

Mention of the Rev. Marcus Harrison, of Jackson, is made elsewhere in this work. The Rev. J. P. Cleaveland, who is one of those who certify to the work of Mr. Child, was president of the newly-formed Marshall College, of Marshall, Michigan, and he had served a pastorate in the First Presbyterian Church of Detroit just before coming to Marshall.

Thomas McGee, one of the Subscribing Elders, was an attorney in Concord and was later elected Probate Judge of the county for several terms.

Such an endorsement as shown on this letter would usually result in the extension of further help on the part of the missionary society.

This letter is postmarked at Jackson, with the red handstamp, dated February 29 (1840).



To the Cor. Sec. of A.H.M. Society.

Rev. & Dear Sir,

The undersigned would respectfully ask, in behalf of the Presbyterian Church in this town, the Home Miss. Society to render them aid to the amount of \$50. to enable them to continue the services of Rev. Elias Child, who has been with us for the last eighteen months past one half of the time—We have exerted ourselves to the utmost of our ability to raise a sum sufficient for his support the last year, and hoped to raise a sufficient sum for the current year—But owing to extreme pecuniary embarrassments, we fail to make out a competent support. Our necessities, and anxiety, to retain the services of Mr. Child with us, only, induce us to ask for aid. The sum we ask is designed to apply on the last half of the current year.

Concord, Jackson Co. Mich. Feb. 25, 1840.

Thomas McGee)	
	)	Elders in the Church
John M. Reed	) -	in Concord
)	

Jackson—27 Feb. 1840.

The Undersigned hereby certify that Bro. Child is universally esteemed, beloved & respected, where he is known—that his labors at Concord have been decidedly blessed, and that we deem the application of the church in Concord eminently entitled to be granted, on account of their own generous liberality.

J. P. Cleaveland, Pres. Marsh. Coll.

Justin Marsh, Pastor Ch. in Leoni

Marcus Harrison, Pastor Ch. in Jackson

CHARLES GRANDISON CLARKE

Born in Connecticut, and not converted until reaching maturity, Charles Grandison Clarke was graduated from Amherst College and later from Auburn Theological Seminary.

After preaching briefly in New York state, Clarke left for Detroit in the fall of 1829, reaching Detroit on September 19, 1829. On the following day the Rev. Clarke preached his first sermon in Detroit. He soon went to Monroe, but after staying there a month he moved on to Ann Arbor, supplying the church there. In November he made another move, this time to Webster (named after Daniel Webster) in Washtenaw County, near present day Dexter.

Clarke preached throughout the area, assisting in the establishment of several Presbyterian churches, including those at Webster and Dexter. At first serving as a missionary under commission from the American Home Missionary Society, Clarke was formally called to the pastorate of the Webster church in 1834, and served there until 1848. He then went to Kensington and New Hudson, in Oakland County, but returned to Webster to close out his active ministry, in 1858. He later moved back to Ann Arbor, the home of his wife, and died there in 1871 at the age of 75 years. His fellow minister at Ypsilanti, the Rev. Ira M. Wead, preached the funeral service.

We reproduce a revealing letter from the Rev. Mr. Clarke, written early in his ministry at Webster. It was mailed from the Dexter post office on March 16, 1832, and bears the rare territorial marking of that post office, in manuscript.

Dexter Michigan March 8, 1832

Rev'd A. Peters, Cor. Sec.
A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir,

By the goodness of God. I am permitted once more to address you. The three months of labor

Rev. Abner Peters

Cor. Sec. A. H. M. S.

144. Avenue Street New York
City

performed by your missionary since the date of my last commission have been exhausting, though pleasant, & I hope in some measure useful. My last report gave you some account of the "protracted meeting", then just closed. I will now endeavor to spread before you some of the fruits of that meeting.

My former communication gave information of the number of subjects of grace during the meeting. A number have hopefully embraced Christ as the portion of their souls since. The effect of the meeting upon professors has been most happy. Most of the members of the church have been revived and strengthened. There has been a gradual & visible increase of religious feeling. I think, I have never witnessed so much engagedness among them—never has there been such apparent spirit of prayer. Some who formerly could not be induced to pray in public have had their tongues unloosed.

Eleven have been added to the church by profession as the firstfruits of the Spirit's presence with us. Eight males & three females. Seven of these are heads of families. All who have professed religion, as well as some who have not done so, give very decided evidence of piety. They seem to have taken hold of duty in full faith, & manifest a disposition to be something in the church. They hear God saying "Go into the vineyard & work" & appear desirous to obey the whole command.

Apparently they have deep devotion of soul—have set their mark high—& aim at nothing short of sinless perfection.

One, an Elder in a church at the east, has united with us by letter since my last report, & numbers are expected to do the same soon. Some more will make profession the first opportunity. The precise number of enquirers I cannot state; but it is considerable. God has not wrought as we hoped, though he has done great things. There has apparently been a deep & wrestling anxiety on the part of Christians—much concern has been found among the impenitent—plain & pointed appeals have been made to them in public & private—still they are not brought out into the liberty of the truth. We hope there is no diminution of interest, & we still trust that rich displays will yet be made of the power & grace of God. He has done great things for us—he has strengthened Zion—to his precious name be all the glory.

All our Sun. Schools, but one have been suspended through the winter, but will soon be resumed. One new school has lately been commenced. There schools in connection with their libraries, are exerting a valuable influence on the young. My Bible Class has been irregular on account of the scattered nature of the population.

The cause of Temperance is greatly on the advance. Our present Society embraces only a portion of my field of labor. It contains more than 100 members. A second Society is about to be organized in another part of the town. In the limits of the present Society, out of more than 30 families who attend upon my ministry, there are only four families, in wh. some or all the members are not connected with the Society. Prejudice against the cause are weakening—opposition is dying away.

In view of all things, I feel that I have abundant reason to bless God & go forward. Could I spread before you the transformation which two years has made in this place, you would rejoice; I trust the great day will reveal to you the fact

that the helping hand you have lent this people has not "been in vain in the Lord."

Yours in the gospel

C. G. Clarke

(There follows a statistical enumeration of pupils, books etc.)

Memorials of a Revival

There are some precious little incidents connected with our recent revival. I might mention several things of touching interest. But there are two cases which ought to be recorded to the praise of sovereign grace.

A.B. connected himself early in life with the Lutheran Church. Removing from the limits of his communion, —becoming absorbed in the pursuits of this life, he gradually declined in piety—absented himself from the peculiar ordinances of the church—became light & vain & wicked—for about twenty years was a back slider. So far had he fallen, that no one would have expected him of piety.

C.D. is a man of classical education, & superior talents. He made a profession of religion while in College in the year 1808—thought of studying theology. After leaving college sat for a year or two under the preaching of a man of lax principles & practice, whom he could not fellowship—consequently neglected church ordinances—law—gave up the forms of religion—& like A.B. was not suspected of having avouched the Lord to be his God.

Both these have been constant attendants on my ministry ever since my location here—have been strictly moral—& as they now declare have been subjects of many cutting reflections. They looked forward to the "four days meeting" with much interest. The first day a separation was called, they were found in the anxious seat, & were the first to declare their intention of serving the Lord in future. There they adopted the resolution of Eathen "if I perish, I perish." Like Peter they seem to

have returned, & like him endeavor to "strengthen their brethren." Are not these brands plucked out of the fire? Are not these miracles of grace?

C.

P.S. I attended a protracted meeting at Auburn in connection with the semi-annual meeting of Presbytery last month. It was a season of great interest. Numbers we hope "were brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light." Probably I shall be in New York in May on my way to the General Assembly---hope to be present at your anniversary.

C. G. Clarke

* * * * *

Dexter, Michigan, Oct. 1, 1831

Cor. Sec. A.H.M.S.

Rev'd & dear Sir,

Another quarter of missionary labor having expired, I hasten to make my communication to you. The past quarter has been one of mingled interest. July was a month of unusual interest---about the first of Aug. I was taken down with the ague & fever, which kept me from the Sanctuary 3 Sabbaths, & made it necessary to suspend my occasional appointments for a longer time. Although, I commenced preaching when I had scarcely strength to stand, & my people feared I should induce a relapse; yet, by the good hand of God I have been sustained, & am gradually gaining strength. Since the renewal of my labors, there has been unusual interest manifest among the hearers, at one of my regular stations for preaching.

This interest has been in some measure absorbed by the breaking out of the small pox, by which numbers were infected before they were aware what the disease was. Two have died with it---but we hope a stop is put to its ravages. Everything looks dark & distressing among us at

present, still we hope that "Behind a framing providence, God hides a smiling face."

Our Sunday schools, five in number, have progressed finely. In one of them, both with pupils & teachers, there has been a deep interest. One youth has been hopefully converted.

I have reorganized a Bib. Class—consisting of about 30 members. This institution has been neglected on account of the scattered state of the people & the multiplicity of my other labors.

The cause of Temperance is on the advance in this town & throughout this county.

The presbytery of Detroit held their annual meeting, the last day of August at Ypsilanti. A continuous meeting was held after the close of business, which lasted five days. After attending the first two days, I was compelled by ill health to leave. The season was full of interest. Br. Wead informed me, at the Annual meeting of the Bib. Soc. &—Sab. Union for this county held last week, that about 40 expressed submission to God before the close of the meeting, & a number since. He will communicate particulars. A four days meeting is appointed at Ann Arbour, to commence on the 20 instant. I hope we shall experience benefit from these meetings.—& that, should I like to report again to you, I may present something to cheer your hearts. I cannot forbear to mention the case of one pious, widowed, mother who came to the meeting with her oldest son. They came more than fifty miles—& doubtless, she often lifted her heart in prayer during the journey. At the close of the second days meeting, he expressed hope. Never shall I forget the tears which overspread her smiling countenance, when I communicated the happy intelligence to her. It is impossible to express in words, what her actions told.

We have received four into the church by letter since my last report, & have the prospect of a larger addition (part by profession) at our next communion. The people express great anxiety

on account of my continuance here after the expiration of my present year—but are almost afraid to ask for further aid. It will be impossible for them to sustain the ministry without further assistance. If they ask much assistance, I hope it will not be withheld, as I presume they will not ask for it after the next year. Emigration is so rapid that after another year, I doubt not two will be needed to cultivate the field now under my care. Wishing grace, - - - , & peace to be multiplied to you & all the directors of the A.H.M.S., I remain

Yours truly

C. G. Clarke

JOHN PAYNE CLEAVELAND

While practically all of the ministers whose letters are reproduced here came to Michigan originally as missionaries, under the sponsorship of the American Home Missionary Society, many of them, as has been seen, later received an official "call" from the church they had been serving and became the minister of such churches. There were so few organized churches in the early days of Michigan that it was necessary that congregations be developed and a church formally instituted before an actual "call" could be issued a minister. This was the natural course of events.

The First Presbyterian Society of Detroit, however, (originally called the First Protestant Society), was established shortly after the close of the War of 1812, at which time Michigan Territory was being opened up to extensive colonization. The first pastor of that society was the very prominent Rev. John Montieth, who served this church as its pastor until 1825. He was followed by the Rev. Noah M. Wells, who retired because of ill health in 1834, and was immediately succeeded in the pastorate by the Rev. John Payne Cleaveland.

At this time the church occupied a wooden edifice at the northeast corner of Woodward Ave. and Larned St. This building was sold during Cleaveland's first year and was removed from the site, a new brick building replacing it at the same location. This building was dedicated in 1835 during the pastorate of Mr. Cleaveland.

The Rev. John Payne Cleaveland was born in 1799 in Byfield parish, Rowley, Mass., and it will be noted that his letter, which we reproduce here, is addressed to "Newbury, Byfield P. O., Mass." He attended the Dummer preparatory school (a Shub. Dummer is mentioned in his letter), and then went to Bowdoin, from which college he was graduated in 1821. After teaching school and studying theology in the East,

he was ordained as pastor of the church at Salem, Mass. He was called to the pastorate of The First Presbyterian Church of Detroit upon the retirement of the Rev. Mr. Wells, and was installed as its pastor on June 1, 1834.

Three years later Mr. Cleaveland resigned the Detroit pastorate, being succeeded by the Rev. George Duffield. Cleaveland went to Marshall, Michigan, where he was elected president of Marshall College, a newly organized institution. While in Marshall, Cleaveland did some preaching but the college failed financially, along with many other institutions throughout the country during the Panic of 1837. He then went to Cincinnati as pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, being the immediate predecessor of the renowned Dr. Lyman Beecher.

Cleaveland served as chaplain in the Civil War and later retired to his native New England where he spent the rest of his days.

His letter, which we reproduce here, is not an official report, as are most of the letters contained in this work. Intended originally for his sister Elisa, it was actually directed to a cousin for reasons succinctly stated in the postscript. His penmanship was well above the average for his day, and it will be seen that he had certain definite ideas as to practice in the business world, as well as in the world of religion. He was a man of 36 years at the time he wrote the letter.

Cleaveland was an Andover classmate of Longfellow, Hawthorne, and President Franklin Pierce.

The letter is postmarked by the circular territorial marking of the Detroit post office, struck in red.

(Mr. Cleaveland will please see the last page)

Detroit, 11th March, 1835.

My dear Sister,

I intended to have answered your letter before this, but an extreme pressure of duties & labours, has crowded out more than one correspondent.

1. A word as to your taking a note for some little dues arising from your auction. Never do it, Elisa, never. Nothing should have been delivered till paid for—But now that they have gotten their articles, just tell Shub. Dummer that you must have your pay immediately. If you delay to collect it of such men, you will never get it, I am sure.

2. As to what you are to do for a living—I will make you an offer, vis—that while I & my family are in health, I will pay you as much as you will earn—If you earn 50 cts per week, I will pay you 50—If 75, I will pay 75 cts, & so on—provided you will keep a fair account of what you do earn. Now will you, on this condition, agree while in health, not to call on me for anything farther? What say you? Is not this a good offer? Can you not find something which you can do? Sow shoes? Or some Factory work? Or school-keeping, or something else? I think less of the school, for you, than I should of almost anything else. In the first place, I need not remind you that it can never be permanent, that is, it can ordinarily last only about 4 or 5 months in every 12. And thus, you would be under the necessity of again getting into some other employment, every fall, which you would find a tedious business. Again, it is really more wearing, than almost any business you could undertake—And yet again, I dont think, Elisa, frankly & kindly, that it is exactly the business you are designed for—I suspect you lack some qualifications, the want of which would always embarass you. My advice, therefore, would be to let that plan go, unless you find it pretty easy to get a school—However, I only suggest—

3. I wish you would do me the favor to write me speedily, & let me know just how your financial concerns stand. You deal in generals, instead of particulars. I wish to know immediately just how much Mr. Jackman has expended more than he received from me—and how much I owe him for his trouble—Just ascertain exactly, and let me know—Give him my respects, and my thanks for all his kind attentions last summer—I beg you would be very particular—How much do you owe for your board? How much have you paid? I wish you to consider this as confidential—except to our kinsman, Mr. Preceptor C. Tohim, I should wish you to shew it, & ask his advice—You may shew it to Mr. Dole, if you feel inclined to—But the fewer confidants & advisors, especially among the yeomanry of our good Warring St.—the easier you will get on—

We feebly hope to visit N.E. this season—but it is very uncertain— You must not be disappointed, if we do not—Should it prove a sickly season, and our lives should again be preserved, it is not very probable we should find it practicable to leave.

The fact is, we should not feel willing to leave our dear little girls behind us, and to take them would be expensive & arduous.—While I have been writing this afternoon, Susan, Susan P. & Agnes have been at sing. school—and Caroline is as busy as a bee bringing in wood, one stick at a time with no company but the hens to talk with.

Give our kind regards to the family you board with, to Mr. Dole's family, & to all our friends. Dont fail to write speedily & particularly.

We are all well, and all unite in most cordial love—

Your brother, sincerely,

John P. Cleaveland

My dear Cousin—I wrote the within, intending to send it to Elisa—but recollecting how very careless she is with her letters and that her most confidential ones are sometimes exposed to the

inspection of the curious, & remembering too, that she is situated among those who are not a little "given to prying into other men's matters" I thought I could venture to ask you to communicate the substance of the within, as coming from me, thro you. If there is any part of it which you do not approve, or do not think it best should pass to her thro' yourself, please drop me a line, & I will govern myself accordingly—I am very much indebted to you for the wise and kind suggestions in your last, and am very sorry to give you so much trouble. My very best regards & those of my wife to your excellent partner, & the love of my little girls to your sons.

Sincerely yours, J.P.C.

SYLVESTER COCHRANE

One of the most interesting and unusual efforts at colonization in Michigan resulted in the settlement of the Eaton County village of Vermontville. To the valley of the Thornapple River came this group of Vermonters, having sent ahead of them a committee to make a selection of suitable lands. The Reverend Sylvester Cochrane, having reached Michigan Territory in 1835 to serve as a missionary, and finding only scattered settlements and a few settlers, returned to his native Vermont and organized a "colony", the members of which signed a compact, along the lines of the famous Mayflower Compact, which would govern them upon arrival in their new home in Michigan.

The Reverend Mr. Cochrane remained as the pastor of this people. One of the letters here reproduced tells of a call to the church at Homer, but his attachment to his fellow Vermonters would not permit his acceptance of the call. After serving this church for about five years, the Reverend Mr. Cochrane apparently felt he should move on to a new field, and in 1848 we find him serving the church at Northville. His son Lyman was a prominent attorney in the early days of Detroit, while the daughter of one of the original members of the colony married Russell A. Alger, later governor of the state of Michigan.

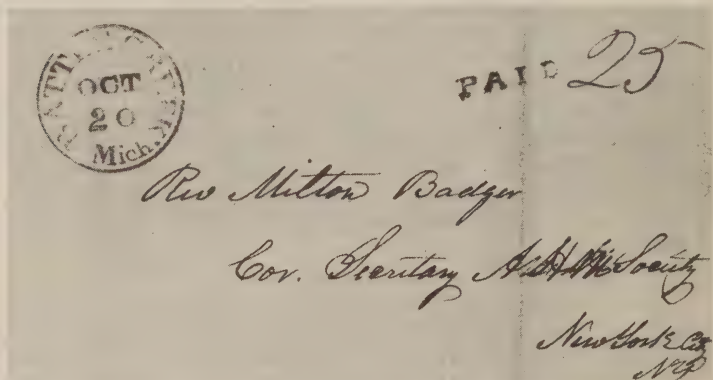
S. J. Church, the author of the first Vermontville letter reproduced here, was one of the committee which came to Michigan to select the lands to be later occupied by this group. They called themselves the "Union Colony."

It will be noted that this letter was mailed at Battle Creek. Although closer to Lansing than to Battle Creek, it must be remembered that the settlement at Lansing, first called "Michigan," was unheard of in 1838, so Battle Creek was the logical post office from which to mail the letter.

Vermontville itself did not have a post office until 1840.

The postmark and the "PAID" marking are in green, a rare color for town cancellations. The "PAID" marking shows that the postage of twenty-five cents was paid at the Battle Creek office, although it was not necessary at that time that postage be prepaid, prepayment of postage not being required until 1855. The postage rates for a single letter sheet, from 1816 until 1845, were 18-3/4 cents for distances from 150 miles to 400 miles, and 25 cents for distances in excess of 400 miles.

We reproduce three letters in the handwriting of Cochrane himself. The first two are from Vermontville, although both were mailed from the Battle Creek office. The third letter was written much later, at a time when he was serving the church at Northville. It bears the Northville handstamp marking, in red.



To the Cor. Sec'y of the A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir

The Petition of the Congregational Church and Society of Vermontville in the County of Eaton and State of Michigan humbly sheweth, that the Church and Society here, although located in the wilderness, are very desirous and anxious to enjoy the Stated

ordinances of the Gospel, but as we are an infant settlement located in a timbered country, have not as yet, been enabled to raise the means of support for our families, it is impossible for us to sustain a Minister without some foreign aid —We are therefore induced to apply to your Society for the sum of One Hundred & fifty Dollars, to enable us to support the Rev'd Sylvester Cochrane already one of your missionaries for the year to come, commencing 1st October.

We are not wholly insensible of the requisitions of your Society of those Churches to whom you extend aid.

But we hope soon, not only to be able to support a minister, but to do something to aid other destitute churches.

Perhaps a short history of our place will not be uninteresting, it will at least exhibit our present & future prospects—In the winter of 1836, Several individuals from different towns in Vermont organized themselves into a Colony for the purpose of emigrating to some of the western States—They sent their agents in the Spring of the same year, and purchased 5760 acres of Govt. land, this was divided into 34 Shares—One article of this Compant was, that they should endeavour to carry with them the religious privileges, which they had enjoyed in Vermont. But in making so large a purchase, in one body, free from unbroken land, the Agents were obliged to retire about 15 miles from any inhabitants, which has subjected the colony to much expense, and privation.—A village was laid out, as nearly the centre as conveniently be done, into lots of ten acres each, so that each colonist might from the beginning enjoy the privilege of School and Meeting.—A fund of \$900 was secured toward building a Meeting House when we get ready to build one—A Lot of 60 acres was reserved for a Parsonage, & this adjoins the village—This we calculate will do much towards supporting the Gospel in a few years—Most of our colonists are on the ground, and we are progressing as fast as our means, and the

difficulties & privations we have had to encounter, will permit—

The region which was an unbroken wilderness when we came in, from 15 to 40 miles around us is now settling quite fast, and we find many professors scattered up and down, who need looking after,—& we consider its an important field for a missionary—Our Church is the only one of the Congregational or Presbyterian order in the county who have enjoyed the Stated labours of a Minister.

We therefore pray you if your funds will permit, to grant us the aforesaid sum, to enable us to sustain our minister for the year to come.

By order of the Church
Vermontville Eaton Co. Michigan
Sept. 28, 1838

S. J. Church

* * * * *

Vermontville Mich 9 Sept 1839

Rev. Charles Hall

Yours of the 23 Aug was duly received—The mistake which you mention in regard to the amount of the drafts I have made on you is capable of an easy and I trust satisfactory explanation. In the commission you sent me you appropriated \$125, for my support the present year. You at the same time informed me that the Sabbath school operation connected with the church in Carmine Street had pledged you this amount for this special purpose. A few days after I received a letter from Mr. Hiram Slauson, secretary of that association informing me that they had voted to raise one hundred and fifty dollars for my support. The following is an extract from Mr. S. letter dated Dec. 6, '38. "As an association we have resolved to pay the sum of \$150. for your support." The following extract is from a subsequent letter dated May 14th '39— "Previous to the anniversary

our association pledged themselves to the parent Society to the amount of \$250, \$150 of which is to be paid in support of yourself and the remaining \$100 to the Rev. Mr. Prentiss in Ohio (Illinois)." The annual report of the Association in April last was made out in accordance with the extracts viz \$150 to me and \$100. to Mr. P—Now as I supposed that the whole of this sum was to pass through your hands I have made my drafts accordingly viz

In favor of W. Carpenter - -	31
I. D. Pierce	40
Holbrook & Co.	60
\$20 in my hands	<u>20</u>
total	\$151

After I had sent away the last draft I perceived that I had overdrawn one dollar in consequence of my not being careful in footing it. This dollar I will send you if necessary. This is a statement of the matter as I understand it. I expected to receive from the Sab School association in Carmine St. \$25 over and above what you appropriated. If I misunderstand it I wish to be corrected.

Yours in the Gospel of Christ

Sylvester Cochrane

* * * * *

Vermontville Mich 3rd March 1840

Secretaries of the H.M. Society

Once more I sit down to address you in regard to the prospects of our Zion in this new and interesting portion of our country. I should have written to you some weeks since had not a circumstance intervened to render writing inexpedient. About the 1st of Jan. I received an urgent call from the church in Homer—distant 40 miles from my present location to settle with them in the ministry with an offer of a salary of \$500. This in the present state of things in this country would be a very competent support and would at once have relieved me from any farther dependence on the

Home Miss. Soc. The question of changing my location was one of no small difficulty. Homer is a large and flourishing village surrounded by a rich farming population. It is an interesting and important field of labor and for a time the indications of Providence almost inclined me to accept the invitation. But how could I abandon the little settlement which I myself had been principally instrumental in establishing and the feeble church which I had collected and founded here in the wilderness. After having weighed the matter and consulted my people and looked at the indications of Providence in the case I have at length come to the conclusion that the path of duty is not sufficiently clear to warrant me in leaving my present location. Since this matter is settled I am therefore under the necessity of looking once more to the Home Miss. Society for aid to enable to continue my labors in this place.—As our population increases their ability to raise the means of my support has encreased in some measure. Still however what they are able to do is far from being adequate to supply those things that are indispensable in a - - - ? . They have recently circulated a subscription and raised about 200 dolls. This in thier present circumstances is as much as they are able to do. But there is little probability that I shall receive a dollar of this in money—money indeed hardly exists in this western country. I have received but one five dollar bill for ministerial services since I came to Mich ($2\frac{1}{2}$ years) except what I have received from you and now and then a wedding fee. Still a minister like all other men must contract many debts in the course of the year which cash only will pay. We do not find any difficulty in procuring the necessaries for our table—but to procure the means of purchasing clothing—paying postage and a multitude of other little items is almost impossible. I know dear Brethren how entirely unworthy I am of any favor from the society with which you are connected and especially of any favor from the hand of God—but should you see fit as you have the year past to make me the recipient of a portion of your bounty both myself and my people will have occasion to remember you with the liveliest gratitude. I have recently addressed a

letter to Mr. Slauson, sec. of the Sab School association in Carmine St. chh. I know not whether it is their intention to pledge you anything for my support. I feel in hopes that they will be disposed to do as much as they did last year. As a people we have not yet been blessed with a general out pouring of God's spirit, yet his presence has been manifested among us to some considerable extent. During the past winter there has been a more interesting state of feeling than I have seen since I came to this place. At our last communion 10 were united with the church and probably six or eight others will unite at our next communion season. The church have recently observed a season of fasting and prayer which has apparently resulted in much good. Our bible class which has been suspended during the winter will again commence in a Sabbath or two. Our Sab School has not been suspended since I first commenced operation 2 years ago. All our children attend. Please to let me hear from you soon.

If you could appropriate to me as much as you did last year it would greatly relieve me.

Yours in Gospel

Sylvester Cochrane

* * * * *

Northville Mich 12th Aug 1848

Sec of Am H M Society

Dear Brethren

You have so many letters and reports to read that I can very readily imagine that a short communication will be more acceptable to you than a long one—especially when we have nothing of very special interest to communicate. With this impression I will endeavor to be brief—I have continued to labor in my little field with a constancy beyond what most ministers could claim. I think for two years past I have not been absent from my pulpit for a single Sabbath except in one

or two instances in which sickness prevented me from preaching. In addition I have preached as often as I could make it convenient at 5 on the Sab and at other times—We have in our church a monthly meeting partly as a concert and partly as a church prayer meeting—This is well attended by the members of the church and interesting. We are about establishing another meeting of a very peculiar character—Religion has been for a long time exceedingly low in all our churches. I have been talking with a few choice spirits belonging to our different churches and we have concluded to form a sort of praying circle or praying society with the design God helping us of greatly elevating the standard of piety in our own hearts, in our families and in the church—I will write you more particularly on this subject hereafter.

I noticed by your last report that you had made an appropriation to the church in Howell to support Rev. Mr. Grannis and one to Green Oak to support Rev. Mr. Marvin—I wrote you some months since in regard to an arrearage due me from both these places for preaching. I have due at Howell between 40 and 50 dollars, which has remained unpaid for more than 4 years and an arrearage of 10 dollars or more at Green Oak which has been due more than three years. In both of these cases I have no doubt but the demand would be promptly paid—if you would simply say to them when they apply for aid that you cannot make an appropriation until this old debt due for preaching was cancelled. Your early attention to this would be a very great favor to me.

As my first four months have expired I wish you to send me a draft of $1\frac{1}{3}$ my appropriation (\$50). It would relieve me very much—I wish to say that you wrote last fall that money had be(en) put into your hands to pay the freight on a box sent to us from Ireland parish Springfield. The freight was \$2.30. If you will fill the draft at \$52 dolls. I would receive it as equivalent.

Yours in the Gospel of Christ

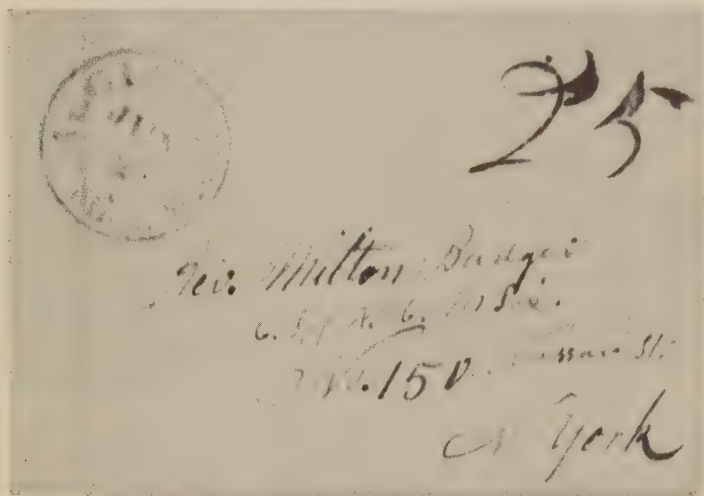
Sylvester Cochrane

R. S. CRAMPTON

We reproduce two very interesting letters from the pen of one of our early missionaries, the Rev. R. S. Crampton, from Mt. Clemens. Both of these letters were written soon after statehood, and relate some of the interesting experiences encountered by these pioneer preachers. His trip on horseback was typical of many these missionaries were called upon to make.

Crampton's reference to the canal which was to cross the state and was to start at Mt. Clemens is also interesting. The canal was actually commenced and evidence of some of the construction work can still be seen in the vicinity of Utica and Rochester. But the Panic of 1837 developed soon after Crampton wrote his hopeful comments, and the canal was never finished.

The "Mr. Hastings" mentioned in the last paragraph of the letter was Eurotas P. Hastings, prominent Detroit banker and Presbyterian layman, referred to in several of the letters reproduced herein.



Mt. Clemens Mich. Dec. 1st 1837

Dear Sir

I will not occupy my own time in writing, or yours in reading a long report. Since my last we have made a great effort in the Temperance cause & in less than one week, more than one hundred & fifty signatures to the pledge of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks, were secured. We had the assistance of Dr. Gibson the state agent.

I have also since my last assisted in organizing a new Chh. in this Co. (in Utica village 16 miles from this) of 19 members several of whom went from my Ch. . —

I was appointed by Presbytery & last week went to Hickory 15 miles S West to organize a Ch there, but the day was so stormy & the travelling so bad that few could be collected & I postponed the business till the 9th of Jan. when I am to go again. On my return the mud & water were so deep in numerous places, as to render it necessary to raise my feet from the stirrup to prevent them from dragging in the mire; & the trees were so thick as to render it necessary to incline my body, now this way & now that, to prevent being torn from my horse. One pious woman member of a Pres, Ch. told me that she had till then seen or heard a Presbyterian minister in four years. The pleasure & gratitude manifested by the few Christians I found, more than compensated me for all my trouble. —

I think I may say that there has been much more feeling in my own Ch for 3 or 4 weeks past than formerly; & I may also add, that the wicked are more bold in sin. I have recently had some peculiar trials in seeing men disregard the Sabbath, but think on the whole that the prospects of Zion are flattering. —

Dec. 6th. The people of Detroit have requested me to preach for them the two next Sabbaths, & as the Methodists must have the Court house for a quarterly meeting on one of them, I have concluded to go. —

I have recently collected for Home Mission
twelve Dollars & 14 cts & pd it over to Mr. Hastings.

Yours etc R. S. Crampton

Rev. A. Peters

25

Rev. A. Peters D.D.
Cor. South St.
No. 15 William St
N.Y.

Mt. Clemens Mich. June 1st 1838

Dear Sir

It is with feelings indescribable that I take my pen to make my quarterly report. At the time of my last, I cherished the hope, & belief, that I should at this time, be able to report a large number of conversions, & other rich spiritual blessings, but the cloud of mercy has passed over us, & we are left in mourning, & to enquire, who is the Achan among us? True there have been a few hopeful conversions. At our last communion we rec'd, two by profession, & shall receive a few at our next, but our fond anticipations & confident hopes have not been realised.

I have never before known a Ch. & congregation in such an interesting state, for so long a time, where there was not a more general revival. For nearly four months we felt almost daily that God was in the midst of us, & that we should soon see

displays of his grace; yet, when I read the book of Haggai I trembled.

When I came here, some of the leading men told me that in one year they would have a decent & comfortable house of worship completed, but all that has yet been done has been only talk about it. I do think this people are faulty in this thing. Twice the "pressure", owing to peculiar circumstances, has been greater here than in any other place with which I am acquainted. The population has diminished from 12 to 9 hundred—many have gone into the country, on to small farms, because they could not find employment in their avocations here. But a canal, extending from the East to the West side of the state, is to commence at this place & be completed in about 18 months. This will doubtless render the village an important port & tend to increase its population immediately.—At times my heart has been ready to sink within me, owing perhaps to several causes.—The disappointments above mentioned—ill health, & pecuniary embarrassments. But the Lord will sustain. Although my health has not been good, I have usually preached three times on the Sabbath,—(always twice) & some weeks, every evening. Could I have obtained help for a few days, I doubt not we should have seen a glorious revival.—Just at the most important moment several of the most devoted on my Ch. were taken sick & the feeling then began to subside.—This being the fact, I listened to the Macedonian cry, & went to Detroit & labored there in a most interesting revival, for nearly three weeks,—one week I preached there every evening & conducted the meetings for prayer & inquiry through the day. Of this revival you have doubtless heard.

The meetings in this place continue to be well attended & solemn. The Sabbath School had about 71 members through the winter---it is to be reorganised next Sab. with very encouraging prospects.—

I have given R. F. Eastman a draft for \$25.00 an extra allowance from the association in the SS of Carmine St. Ch. Also \$100.00 for the amount due me this day.—I conferred with Mr. Hastings &

he directed me to draw upon you, as it would be a special accomodation to me & Mr. Eastman who has assisted me in time of trouble.

Yours truly R. S. Crampton

P.S. Should you think of it when Mr. Eastman calls with his drafts, I wish you would request him to get for me the 2nd & 3rd vols of Daniel A. Clark's Sermons. (I have the 1st vol.) & oblige.

R. S. C.

ALANSON DARWIN

The village of Tecumseh, in Lenawee County, was one of the first inland communities to be settled in Michigan. The tenth post office to be established in what is now Michigan was located at Tecumseh. The village and its inhabitants played a prominent part in territorial and early statehood days.

Although there had been itinerant preaching in Tecumseh at an earlier date, Alanson Darwin, who came to the area about 1825 or 1826, was the first settled minister in that village. He established the Tecumseh Presbyterian Church in April of 1826 and continued as its pastor for several years. A few years later he established the church at Blissfield, having preached there at intervals before that date. A member of this new church recounted that the Reverend Mr. Darwin travelled through "fourteen miles of wilderness to reach us."

In 1827 Darwin settled a farm in Raisin Township and lived there during much of the time that he was preaching. It is reported that on his farm were discovered fossil bones of a prehistoric mammoth. Some of his parishioners objected to his part-time farming, and he refers to such objections in one of his letters.

Available records indicate that Darwin served the Tecumseh church until his death in 1831, at the age of 48. His letters make interesting reading, and surely give us a first hand report of life as it was lived in territorial Michigan.

Both of the letters here reproduced are franked by the manuscript marking of Tecumseh. As territorial markings they are rare items.

Tecumseh Sept. 10, 1829

Rev. A. Peters Cor Sèc A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir

Since my last, there has nothing special occurred. I have still to lament the absence of the consecrating influences of the Spirit. Though there (are) a few who appear serious minded, yet there are not those deep convictions of sin, which promise a speedy application to the Saviour. The people generally seem to have a respect & value for religious privileges. One instance is evidence of this. At the season for cutting hay, they were unwilling that I should labour, but generously turned out & secured the hay necessary for my use; alleging, that they feared if I should labour, I should be sick & they would be destitute for many Sabbaths.

There has not been more than one half the spirits used in haying & harvesting this year, that there has been in former years. Two men from this place, have just finished a job of \$400 in making the Chicago road. They used no spirituous liquors, their job was done with expedition, to good profit, & to the satisfaction of the Superintendent. While on another job near this the contractor brought a barrel of whiskey, when he commenced—and his men were so afflicted with sickness & sore eyes that it was a serious interruption to the performance of the work.

I have introduced the monthly concert of prayer & begun a bible class but it is yet doubtful how it will succeed, but I hope for the best. Could I once get the youth engaged in the study of the scriptures, I should think there would be some hope of their being brought into the spiritual kingdom of the Redeemer more than there now is.

Two years have elapsed since I came to this place. A review of them affords considerable encouragement. Though I have had some adverse things to retard the advance of the gospel—yet I have had no direct opposition to encounter. However thoughtless many may be of spiritual things,

there has been no one, who has opposed, either by conduct or conversation. I have many mercies to be thankful, but one mercy that ought to be particularly mentioned, is, the union & harmony that prevails in the society.

You will receive a communication from the Trustees, requesting the renewal of my commission, & asking for a continuation of aid. They petition for the same sum that has been granted for the two years past—This would enable me to give more of my time to the ministry than I have done yet—which seems necessary, not only for the benefit of this people, but for that of the smaller settlements in this vicinity. By the letter from Blissfield you will learn that the little attention I have paid to them has not been wholly in vain. There are other places that need missionary attention as well as they.

In the bonds of the gospel,

Yours

A. Darwin

* * * * *

Tecumseh Jan'y 26: 1831

Rev. A. Peters, Cor. Sec. A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir,

A few days since I received a Commission from the Amer. S. S. Union appointing me their Agent in this vicinity. I shall endeavor to comply with their instructions, as far as my other ministerial duties will permit—I am in hopes that several schools will be opened in the spring. One hindrance to the establishment of S. Schools is the want of suitable buildings in which to hold them; more especially in the cold weather. But few school houses are yet erected; but preparations are making for the erection of a number.

In our little church, spirituality is evidently increasing. A spirit of prayer is shed down on a number of its members. We have 2 weekly prayer meetings—on Sabbath & Thursday evenings. Elders

have been lately chosen, & stated seasons of Communion appointed. The Lord's Supper is to be administered quarterly.

The Temperance cause is flourishing. A Temperance Society has been established. It began with 44 members. We calculate on at least 100. The Society embraces the most respectable part of community—One merchant has discontinued the sale of ardent spirits.

A County Bible Society has been formed, & measures are in operation for the supply of those destitute of the Scriptures.

This letter will be accompanied by a communication from the Elders of the Church, requesting further Missionary aid. This aid will be necessary to enable me to bestow that ministerial labour, which the situation of the Society requires. I have made a new arrangement with the Trustees, so that my engagements begun on the 1st January. It is considered more convenient to begin at that time. If you see fit to grant me another commission it may be dated from the beginning of the year.

Some delay in applying to the Executive Committee for aid has occurred, principally owing to a wish to ascertain what, would probably (be) the effect of the emigration the season past—Some valuable acquisitions to the Society & church have been made—. But some of the new settlers are so far remote as to render their assistance small. Others are of such a character that no reasonable expectations of help from them can be formed. Several families are from the lower classes of the English community—The extension of the settlement increases my labours—& renders visits & lectures in the remote parts necessary.

It is considered best that I should remove to the village, dispose of my land, build me an house, & devote my time to the ministry, without the interruptions of manual labour. This is the general wish of the people, & they offer to assist me in building all they can. The subscription for my

support for 1831—will probably be about \$250, but as it is to be paid in produce & such things as the people have to spare—it is not worth more than two thirds of that sum in cash.

One of the members of the church wishes to have the Committee aware of the importance of the Gospel ministry in this part of the country arising from our vicinity to the Roman Catholics. Two thirds of the population of the adjoining County of Monroe are of that persuasion—They are very zealous & active in endeavoring to gain proselytes. An ignorant & weakminded young woman belonging to the church of Blissfield, went to reside in a family of Catholics, & was induced to join them—She is now in the nunnery. I have thought it my duty, in my public instructions to inform the people of the gross errors of the Catholics—of which they were generally ignorant.

Yours sincerely

A. Darwin

DAVID R. DIXON

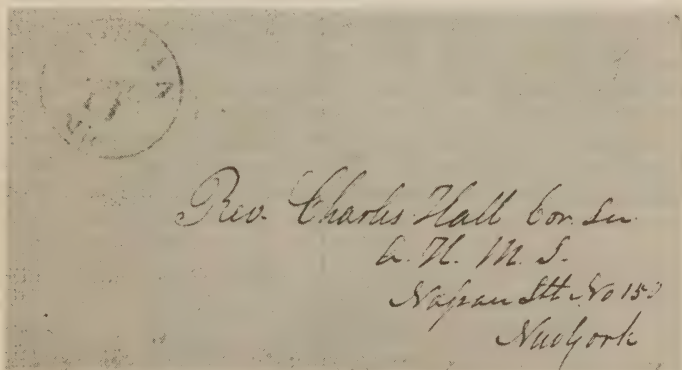
The Reverend David R. Dixon was one of the early missionaries to come to Lenawee County. His letter date-lined at Franklin and mailed at the Tipton post office, is typical of the quarterly reports of these early missionaries.

Bean Creek, which he mentions, is also known as Tiffin River, and flows southward through Rollin and Hudson Townships and on into Ohio. His reference to "br Pratt" at the Bean Creek church is to the Rev. Davis Pratt, first pastor of "The Presbyterian Church of Bean Creek," which later became the Congregational Church of Hudson, organized in 1836.

The "Somerset" to which he makes reference was over the county line in Hillsdale County.

The opening paragraph of his report reveals a devotion and consecration which, for the most part, was typical of all of these early missionaries. So often they lament, as does Dixon, their inadequacy and own personal weaknesses. It would appear that he had also served as a missionary in Mexico, and was even considering returning to that field.

The letter is handstamped with the Adrian townmark, in green.



Rev. Charles Hall
L. H. M. S.
Adrian Mich. 80 1837
New York

Franklin (Tipton P.O.) Dec. 17, 1838

Rev. Charles Hall, Sec. A.H.M.S.

Dear Brother.

Thro grace I have been enabled to persevere in my labors thro another quarter and to complete the period of my commission. Altho my conflicts are not over, and I cannot say that all my foes are slain, yet I am permitted to feel that I have made some progress. In answer to your prayers in my behalf and to my earnest cries for help, I have from time to time found relief and gained a little more evidence that my peace is made with God, and that I shall at length be cleansed from all unrighteousness. I find that I enjoy peace of mind in proportion as I am enabled to keep down all unholy excitement and cultivate fervent charity toward the brethren. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him." O that I, and all the church had more of that "charity which— thinketh no evil." Then would not our beloved Zion have been so grievously torn asunder.

Having had intimations that the close of the present year would probably terminate my labors in this place, and obtaining the consent of the elders and Trustees of the society to be absent a part of the time, I have during the last quarter spent one Sabbath in Somerset where I labored a part of the time last year. Here I administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This with the exception of one Sabbath, is the only preaching which that church has been able to obtain from any minister of their own denomination during the year. I have also spent three sabbaths with the chh at Bean Creek where br. Pratt was employed two years ago, and am under engagement to spend one more sabbath there. There was some excitement I was told among that people in the early part of the season and a number of hopeful conversions in connection with a Methodist quarterly meeting which was attended by the Presbyterian brethren also and protracted for a number of days. During the summer br. Tomlinson of Adrian spent a week there and 14 members were added to the church, about half of them by profession—some others are expected to unite soon.

On my tours out to Bean Creek which is about 26 miles distant I have filled my Portmanteau with some of the Volumns of the Am. Tract Societie's publications and have found a very ready sale for them by the way. I have sold about \$20 worth and I should think from the readiness with which they were sold that hundreds of dollars worth might be readily disposed of in this county and thousands in the state. An Elder of the Baptist church in the township of Rollin expressed a deep interest in the circulation of these volumns, and said that he presumed as many as fifteen or twenty setts of the "Evangelical Family Library" might be readily sold among his people. Since engaging in the business the thought has been impressed on my mind, that I might do as much good as an agent of the Tract Society in carrying about and disposing of their publications as in any other way. I have thought of writing to bro. Rouse the Tract Agent for the Western Reserve and this state, but I do not know where to find him. Please mention me to bro. Eastman, and request him to write me on the subject. My present engagements will terminate after two sabbaths. What the Lord will then do with me I know not. I have received an invitation to return to my former charge in Mexico, but am waiting for further communications from them. Have not yet decided what is duty. At any rate should not think of removing till navigation should open in the spring, and in the mean time should be glad to be usefully employed.

The state of things in Franklin is much as it was when I wrote you last.

Since May last there has been three hopeful conversions, one of whom united with the church at our last communion.

Our Sabbath school numbered about ---during the summer.

The Temperance cause is making gradual progress. About 12 new signatures were obtained to the Total abstinence pledge at our last monthly meeting. Petitions are about being circulated for the supression of the sale of intoxicating liquors.

Our two temperance taverns are well sustained, but we regret to say that neither of them yet goes for the whole.

I have rec'd Mr. Whittlesey's Receipt of your payment for the Mothers Magazine of the present year. As I have rec'd no instructions to the contrary I shall make my drafts on New York.

For the Home Missionary of the present year accept my grateful acknowledgements,---and for all the favors which I have rec'd of the A.H.M.S. May the wisdom of Heaven ever guide you in all your deliberations.

Yours affectionately

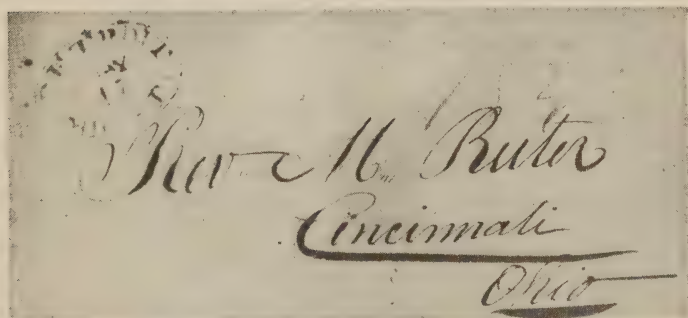
D. R. Dixon

REV. JAMES F. DONAHOO

We are unable to find much biographical data concerning the Rev. James F. Donahoo. The records of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Michigan, which refer to him as Jas. F. Donahoe, indicate that he was the pastor of the St. Clair Mission, in the Detroit District of the Ohio Conference, in 1827, the same year this letter was written.

Saint Clair County was organized in 1821. The post office at Saint Clair was not established until 1826, so there is some merit to the reverend gentleman's reference to his parish as being on the "frontteer of our western world."

It must be remembered that all of these letters were written in longhand. Some of them require considerable study before they can be deciphered. The reference by Rev. Donahoo to the "only Locle Preacher" in the town caused some study, but "locle" could surely be pronounced as "local", so we conclude that is what the writer meant by this reference.



Rev H. Butler
Cincinnati
Ohio

St Clair Mission. M.. Territory

Dear Brother:

Through the Grace of God, I am alive, in good health, and, am striving to do the work assigned me,

in this station. You are not unapprised of the numerous evils attending the frontteers of our western world, and let me assure you we are not without our part in this place. However we have consolation in the promise "Lo I am with you allways". I have had a common share of prosperity this year in this place; some soles have been happily converted to God, from the error of their ways.

There is, according to a late representation made to me, a good opening for a Mission Astablishment, at the Soo of St Marys, near the outlet of Lake Superior. At this place is Fort Brady, and there are about 200 Soldiers, Twelve English Families, besides some French & many Indians. The Church of England, Baptist, and Presbyterians, have Missions at Green Bay, Macanaw, etc, but, there is no one at the Soo of St. Mary's. If it is possible for the Methodist Church to send a Missionary on immediately or not laiter than next Con. we may injoy an offer made for missions, by the Government of the United States, in a treaty with the Indians. This appropriation is \$1000 per annum, with one Section of land. The person to apply to is Col. McKiney, who is at this time on a tour, to the City of Washington. However we expect him to return, and, if posable, our Br. Costan will have an interview with him. If you have it not in your power, personally to do any thing towards this, now, you may have access to Bishop McKendree, or some others, who may by an offer to Clo. McKiney, obtain the refuseal of an establishment.

You may want to know who my informer is, it the Rev. J. H. Smith, the only Locle Preacher in St Clair City. he has been on a tour, to the North this spring, and, returned with those glad tidings. Which I hope, in the establishment of a Mission at the Soo will be to much people, great joy.

I am Dear Br. Yours etc

Jas. F. Donahoo.

May 10—1827

Give my respects especially to Br. Bishop and family.

J. F. D.

Although the post office at Saint Clair had been established the year previous to the writing of this letter, the letter was actually mailed from Detroit, as appears from the postmark. It was not unusual in those early days for the inhabitants to have their letters carried by messenger to Detroit and posted there, as travel between towns was slow at best, and it was believed that by mailing their letters at Detroit they would be despatched to their destination much sooner than if they were mailed at outlying offices.

The postmark on this particular letter was the second of three types used by the Detroit post office during territorial days. The first was a straight-line postmark, the oval type here used was the second, and the third type was a small circular marking. Although written on May 10, 1827, the letter was not postmarked to leave Detroit until exactly one week later.

In addition to illustrating the cover itself, we also show the closing portion of the letter, to confirm the fact that this missionary spelled his surname as "Donahoo", and not "Donahoe", as shown in the records of the Methodist Church.

may, obtain the refusal and establishment.
You may want to know who my informant is, the Rev D. W. Smith, the only Local Preacher in St Clair City. he has been on a tour, to the North this spring, and returned with those glad tidings. Which I hope, in the establishment of a Mission at the Soo, will be to much people's great joy.
I am Dear Brethren &c
May 10-1827- John F. Donahoo

Give my respects especially to Br Bishop and family
J. F. D.

GEORGE DUFFIELD

Dr. George Duffield was one of the best known of the Presbyterian ministers to serve in Michigan during the 19th Century. Born in Pennsylvania and educated at the university of that state, he was licensed to preach before he was of voting age.

After serving several churches in the East, Dr. Duffield came to Michigan in 1838 and served the First Presbyterian Church of Detroit from that date until his death in 1868. He was independent in thought and at one time was tried for heresy because of published sentiments on the subject of regeneration, from which charge he was cleared.

Duffield was active in civic matters, and served for ten years as a regent of the University of Michigan. He was much sought after as a public speaker, and was an ardent temperance advocate.

The letter which we reproduce here is apparently characteristic of Dr. Duffield. There could be but little question in the mind of the Rev. Charles Hall as to the opinion held by Duffield of the minister concerning whom inquiry was made. For obvious reasons we have deleted from the letter the name of the minister in question.

The Rev. Ch. Hall cor. Sec.
of Am. H. M. Soc.
New York

Detroit, Oct. 20, 1847

The Rev. C. Hall

Rev & dear Sir

On Return yesterday from our Synod at Kalamazoo I found your letter inquiring relative to Rev.———. I know very little personally of this man & that little impressed me unfavorably. He was involved in a quarrel with Mr. Thompson of St Clair—tried to commence process against him in the civil court on an action for damages & the church of that place "withdrew with fellowship" from him. He was a Con'l minister from I believe —— N. Y. His name is not in good odour—I should not like to see him connected with any of our churches & brother Bullard had better be directed to write to Mr. Thompson or myself before he comes entangled with him. Last accounts I had heard of him before your letter was that he was studying law. he borrowed money from me but I considered it at the time given & gave it to keep temptation out of his way.

As to the Oberlin tract—I had been given to understand an article I had prepared would appear in Oct'r No. of Bib. Rep—but know not why it did not. Our Presby & Synod have both adopted & ordered to be published another & different article—which will probably go to press next week. Our Synod unanimously approved it & asked its publication.

Yours truly

Geo Duffield

GEORGE EASTMAN

The name of the Rev. George Eastman must be included in any list of the early missionaries coming to Michigan. From available records it would appear that he first came to Troy, in Oakland County, in territorial days, sometime in 1833. This is the area which was served earlier by the Rev. George Hornell (supra). Hornell referred to the locality as Niles Corners, by which name it was also known, as it had been established by Johnson Niles some years earlier.

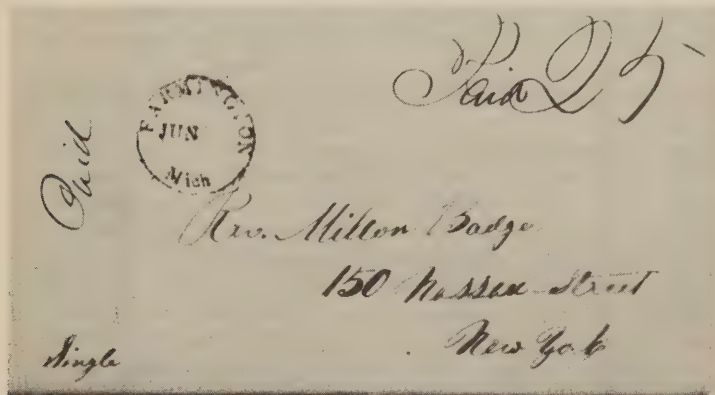
In 1843 we find Eastman serving the churches in Birmingham (Bloomfield) and Southfield, while in 1844 he was spending some, if not all, of his time with the churches over the Wayne County line, in Livonia and Nankin. It is reported that Eastman was present at the organization meeting of the Bloomfield (Birmingham) Presbyterian Church in 1834.

In this connection it must be remembered that groups of unorganized worshippers would meet for several years before effecting an actual church organization and extending a formal "call" to a minister. This explains the rather paradoxical statement in the last paragraph of the last of the Eastman letters, in which the officers of the Congregational Church of Farmington state that they desire a commission for "Rev Mr Eastman" but that he is not their pastor nor do they contemplate his "installment."

The last comment was apparently placed there by the home office, where it was observed, and noted, that they had extended aid to this same church for about twenty years. After that period of time it was still not self-supporting.

The first letter from Eastman bears the very rare territorial postmark, in manuscript, of the Troy post office. While not unique, it is very rare.

The second and the third of the Eastman letters were date lined at Farmington and were both postmarked with the unique marking of that post office used during the early 1840's. It is a small circular marking, in all probability made of metal, as the letters making up the detail of the townmark are smaller and more distinct than most of the handstamps used at the time. Only the post office of Trenton used a smaller townmark during all of Michigan's stampless cover era.



Troy, M.T. Oct. 15, 1834

Rev. & dear Sir,

One year has elapsed since the commencement of my labors in this place; & although there has been no revival of religion, & only two hopeful conversions; yet, something has been done. That want of personal responsibility, which is so destructive to the vital energies of the church, & which spreads a moral paralysis through all its members, has, to a considerable extent, been removed; & this, I trust, will, under God, be the means of preparing the way for future blessings.

The meetings on the Sabbath have been well attended & solemn; & the number, who come to the house of the Lord has increased.

During the past year my pulpit has not been

left vacant a single sabbath, except when I have been called away for some public occasion.—I have shared, to some extent, in the trials, wh are inseparable from the Missionary life; still, I have found no cause to regret my coming to this field of labor, nor have I for a moment sighed for the pleasant gardens of N.E.

Here is work enough for the missionary & such work too as is the most congenial to his feelings. Here he is to sow the seed, & also to water it—not with those chilling, ice bordered streams, wh flow from the regions of skepticism & infidelity; but with those vivifying rills, wh are poured from the heart that yearns over dying men. He is to cultivate the ground, wh is, to an alarming extent, overgrown with briars & thorns. He must not therefore, merely employ the appropriate instruments for the accomplishment of his work, but he must ply them with untiring assiduity. He must not be disheartened by any inconsiderable difficulties, nor feel that nothing has been done, if he does not see the grain waving in the field on the same day in wh the seed was sown. The husband man looks for a crop, wh shall be, in a good degree, proportionate to the amount of labor he has performed, & the richness of the soil he has cultivated. The same principle holds true respecting the labors of the Missionary; & if he wd keep this in mind, it wd not only serve to keep him from despondency, but it wd also stimulate him in duty.

I have received from the people, in addition to the two hundred dollars from the A.H.M.S., one hundred & forty dollars. The remainder they have pledged themselves to pay, so that I shall expect nothing more from the Society.

Oct. 9, 1833. is the time in wh I commenced my labors in this place.

(There then follows a brief diagram or chart, showing added members to the church, Bible class, Sunday school and similar data.)

George Eastman
Missionary at Troy
Michigan

Farmington, Oakland Co. Mich. June 1, 1843.

Rev. Milton Badger,

Dear Brother,

I have now finished another quarter in the service of the A.H.M.S., but have nothing of special interest to report. The meetings on the Sabbath have been well attended, & each Society has sustained a weekly prayer meeting. The Sabbath school at Bloomfield is in a more flourishing condition than it has been in any previous year. In Southfield it is not much different in point of numbers or interest from what it was last year. To each church there have been admissions since my last report. Some interesting lambs have been brought into the fold of Christ. The Mormons & Universalists are making extraordinary efforts in this vicinity to propagate their sentiments; & I use this as an argument to stimulate the church to a more vigorous effort in bringing in to the Sabbath School the children of those parents who feel little interest in religion. My health has been good this year thus far, & also that of my family, except my youngest child, wh is four months old. It was seized with a cold wh settled upon its lungs when it was two weeks old, from wh it has not recovered, & it is doubtful whether it will ever recover. Shd like to have the remaining drafts forwarded quarterly.

Yours sincerely,

Geo. Eastman

Miss'y at Bloomfield & Southfield

Rev. Milton Badger

* * * * *

Farmington Oakland Co. Mich. July 15, 1844

Rev. Milton Badger,

Dear Brother,

Although it is not three months since my last report, yet, three quarters of a year, from the date of my last commission, have elapsed. Since

my last I have had occasion to spend some time in laboring with the church in Livonia & Nankin in order to remove some wrong notions which a part of the members had in regard to their duty towards a certain individual of their body. In the case now alluded to there is a striking instance of the necessity of pastoral labor among those churches, which have long been without a watchman & guide. Some have acknowledged to me that their minds have been relieved in consequence of remarks which I made to them upon that subject. The difficulty appears to have grown out of long cherished prejudices which had been awakened by some recent transactions. To remove these baneful needs is not among the least difficult part of a missionaries labors. Nothing of special importance has occurred since my last. In regard to a draft I would say, that I should like to have you forward one for the payment of two quarters at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Geo. Eastman

* * * * *

Mt. Clemens, M.T. July 9, 1835.

Rev. & dear Sir,

As another three months labor has been performed since I engaged in the service of the A.H.M.S. another report becomes due. Have not so cheering intelligence to communicate as I could wish; yet my labors I trust have not been in vain. Before I came to this place the members of our church were like sheep scattered upon the mountains with no one to look after them, or to protect them. In consequence of their being thus situated they have become lean & it will require much labor to restore these sheep to a healthful & vigorous state. Social, family & secret prayer have been by many almost entirely neglected. But there is a happy change in this respect. All who have united with the church have agreed to maintain family worship & to abstain from the use of ardent spirits as an article of luxury. There has been a far better attendance on the Sabbath exercises

Office of M. Y. Fiske L
July 19

Rev. Absalom Peters
142 Nassau street
New York

since I came to this place than ever there was before. There has been more than a usual solemnity in our meetings on the Sabbath.

Yours truly

Rev. Absalom Peters

George Eastman
Missionary at Mt. Clemens
Macomb Co. M.T.

* * * * *

Farmington, Oakland Co., Mich., Oct 7, 1846.

Rev. Dr. Badger—

Dear Sir—

In making another application to the Home Missionary Society for aid, we would not forget the aid—the repeated aid we have already received, nor cherish any other than feelings of the most sincere gratitude towards the Society, through whose benefactions we have been already so much benefitted. And were there no hope that the Lord would be pleased to bestow his special blessing

upon this church, and cause that our united and selfdenying and perservering efforts, in connection with the assistance we may receive, should result in our being built up, the present application would not be made. For we would not have the funds of the Society appropriated on any other principle, than the one which we suppose uniformly governs its proceedings—to expend its funds where there is the prospect of the greatest present and permanent good. For however deeply we may feel for our own spiritual welfare as individuals, and for our church and our families and the community, we would not have other churches and communities, whose claims on your attention are superior to our own, passed by and neglected for our benefit.

Though the number of our church is small, we cherish the hope, that a united and vigorous effort will soon be made to elevate the standard of personal piety among its members, and for the conversion of those in our families and in the community who are now living without any true spiritual knowledge of the Savior. We are satisfied that the state of indifference and inactivity in which we have so long been, is doing us injury, and if longer continued in, may prove our ruin. We trust there are those among us who are daily and continually praying, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known, in wrath remember mercy." This we regard as indicative of good, and that the Lord has yet mercy in store for this part of his heritage.

There is another source of encouragement. There are many families in this place, and some of them of wealth and influence, not connected with any religious society, who are open to our exertions. From families of this description and from others connected with our society, we consider there are ample materials for a large and flourishing church.

The physical resources of this town is another source of encouragement. For agricultural purposes, it is considered one of the first in the state. There are also some important water privileges. Our village, in which our Meeting House is located,

though not large is growing, and from its occupying nearly the centre of the town, renders our Meeting House easily accessible. The town is regarded as one of the most healthy in the state. During the present season when there has been so much sickness in some of the adjoining towns and in many parts of the state, we have been comparatively exempt. And we cannot avoid the conviction, that a town, containing at this time fifteen hundred inhabitants, and possessing so many resources for present and future wealth, should not be neglected.

There is one more reason why we make our present application. We do not wish that your Society should fail of obtaining that very important object which it has been your design to accomplish—to render this church and Society independent of foreign aid, to give it the disposition and the ability to refund what it has already received, and then by extending cheerfully and promptly and generously its aid to churches needing assistance to learn, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Our church is called the Congregational Church of Farmington—the number of communicants is forty—the average attendance on public worship is from 75 to 100.—the denominations and congregations immediately contiguous are the Methodists and Baptists—the average size of the Baptists from 100 to 150 of the Methodists from 75 to 100. The Methodist House of Worship is in the village near ours, the Baptist four miles distant. The salary the Society proposes to raise is three hundred dollars; of which they will raise \$200, and desire one hundred dollars from the Missionary Society.

Rev Mr. Eastman for whom a commission is desired is not the pastor of the church nor are any arrangements made or contemplated for his installment.—name and post office address—Henry E. Eastman Farmington Oakland Co. Mich.—

Yours very respectfully,

Mark Arnold)	
W E Pier	)	Trustees
Chas Eastman)	

Francis Courter)
W E Pier) Deacons

We cordially concur in the above request &
recommend the appropriation to be made.

Geo. Duffield)
E. P. Hastings) Com.

The Church belongs to the Presb. of Detroit

E.P.H.

This church has been aided ever since 1825,
and the first grant made to it alone was \$100 for
the year beginning Oct. 1826.

SAMUEL FLEMING

Except for the fact that the Rev. Samuel Fleming served the Manchester Presbyterian Church as its pastor from 1849 until 1853, I can find no reference to his work in Michigan. The appeal of the trustees of the church for aid in maintaining the work of this gentleman in their midst was apparently obtained, as he remained with this people for four years after this appeal for aid was made.

This church was first known as the Presbyterian Church of Sharon and Bridgewater. Two of the trustees named held public office in the early days of Manchester and one was a storekeeper.

The letter was handstamped at the Manchester post office with the circular handstamp of that office, struck in red.

Rev. Chas. Hall Secy A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir

The Presbyterian Church of Manchester are making an effort to obtain the services of the Rev Samuel Fleming as their minister.

But in our poverty are unable to do so without aid from your society. We propose to rais a salary of four Hundred dollars, of this sum the congregation will not be able to rais more than two hundred dollars, the remaining two hundred we must depend on your Society for.

Mr. Fleming commenced his labours with us on the first of April last, He came among us a stranger, but his labours thus far have been very acceptable, and it is contemplated in the course of the year if Providence should so seem to direct, to settle him as the Pastor of this church.

We are obliged to ask for this amount from

the fact, that this church have to rais the sum of four hundred dollars within the next six months for the purpose of extinguishing their indebtedness for their house of Worship.

Presuming you are not ignorant of the state of our affairs we have not been as particular in this statements.

Manchester Michigan May 21/49

John Keyes)	
S. H. Perkins)	
J. J. Clarkson	)	Trustees
W. D. Clark)	

LUMAN FOOTE

Most of the missionaries who are mentioned in these pages were sent out by the American Home Missionary Society, as we have seen, and were either Presbyterian or Congregational clergymen. We reproduce here a portion only of a report from an Episcopalean rector, also a missionary. The conclusion of the report is entirely missing.

The Reverend Luman Foote was a Vermonter. Lucius Lyon, a very prominent Michigan citizen and public official just before and just after statehood, wrote Foote at Tinmouth, Vermont, in 1840, telling him of the need for Episcopalean rectors in several Michigan communities, including Tecumseh, Marshall and Kalamazoo. Lyon had written the Rev. James Ballard similarly concerning the possibilities in the Grand River Valley (ante).

It would appear that shortly after the receipt of the Lyon letter that Foote came to Michigan. He served as the second rector of the Grace Episcopal Church of Jonesville, and while serving that parish he worked among members of his denomination in nearby Hillsdale. In fact, the Rev. Mr. Foote presided at the organization meeting of the St. Peter's Episcopal Church of Hillsdale in the late summer of 1844. He was the rector of the Jonesville church from 1844 until 1846.

Subsequent reference is made to the Rev. Mr. Foote as being "lately of Charlotte," so he probably served the church in that community also. His son, Edward A. Foote, was a prominent citizen of Eaton County, in which county Charlotte is located.

The fragment of letter reproduced leaves us in mid-air. Just where were they to hold their church services? The records show that on some occasions they used the railroad depot for that purpose. Possibly the Rev. Mr. Foote

was to reveal another location fully as unique as the depot. We regret that the remainder of his letter is missing.

The letter is handstamped at Jonesville with the blue townmark of that post office. The year is not shown. The first part of the report is in chart form, and after the chart appears the following:

To the Rev'd N. Sayre Harris
Secretary & Gen'l Agent of the Committee of
Domestic Missions

Dear Sir—

Above I transmit you my semi-annual Return for the half year ending the first of April instant. The proper time for making it out found me necessarily engaged in preparing a house to remove my family into, and in removing them—And nextly I was visited by an attack of fever & ague which prevented my preaching for two Sundays. My report is indeed a very lean & discouraging one. But were your Committee aware of all the difficulties & disadvantages under which I labour they would perceive that my want (of) success is not wholly attributable to my inefficiency. We have no place of worship in either village. At Hillsdale we are compelled to use a small room in the - - -

AND THERE THE LETTER ENDS! WHERE DID
THEY HOLD CHURCH?

WILLIAM FULLER

The Rev. William Fuller followed the Rev. Henry H. Northrop as missionary to the White Pigeon Presbyterian Church, probably beginning his work there in 1845. This 1850 letter from Fuller indicates that he had begun work at VanBuren, over the state line in Indiana, late in 1849. His reference to another "outpost," "where the Chicago road crosses Crooked Creek" would make three separate congregations which he was serving.

This letter is date-lined at White Pigeon and his statement that "This out post belongs rather to my White Pigeon than to my Vanburen station" seems to make it sufficiently clear that Fuller was still serving the White Pigeon church in 1850 and was not spending his entire time with the Indiana church.

Fuller appears to have been a militant and aggressive missionary. His letter is newsy, and makes interesting reading. It bears the circular handstamp of the White Pigeon post office, struck in red.

\$25 Due

2 quarterly report

White Pigeon, St. Joseph Co. Mich. June 17:
1850

Secretaries A.H.M.S.

My second quarter of missionary service in Vanburen, Lagrange Co. Indiana, ended on the 15 of June. I was absent two Sabbaths as a commissioner to the General Assembly at Detroit. Our Sabbath School and Bible Class are flourishing. The attendance on the preaching of the word continues as on the last quarter as to numbers. The weekly prayer meetings are sustained. I am not aware that any minister, except a Methodist once in two weeks, 2 or 3 miles distant, from our place of meeting, besides myself preaches now in the township. I have preached once & sometimes twice a week, evenings, in Vanburen, in addition to one sermon on Sabbath afternoon.

In respect to the Temperance cause;—at the township election in April, the people voted No License: only two votes were cast in favor of having intoxicating liquor sold. But there was found a man or rather hominem istum impurissimum who has since opened a public house and commenced selling liquors in defiance of law and public sentiment. Resort must now be had to legal measures to stop him. I hear of persons' going and patronizing his bar who were before free from the vice of drinking. This example of the setting the law at naught goes to show the necessity of weightier than pecuniary penalties in such cases. It must be made a penitentiary offense to sell alcoholic liquors as a beverage, before the sales can be effectually prohibited.

I have commenced preaching about once in two weeks either Sabbath evening on my way home, or on some evening of the week, 5 miles North of Vanburen and three miles east of White Pigeon, where the Chicago road crosses the Crooked Creek. The Campbellites, had made some efforts there. A preacher of that name resides in the vicinity, who had ceased to hold meetings because the people would no longer go to hear him. The Episcopal Methodists came and broke them up and formed a class of their own. They went down and their chief man returned to the Episcopal Methodists. But towards spring all meetings of all these denominations ceased. They seemed disposed to have me come and preach to them when I could. I had occasionally preached in their school-house 3 or 4 years ago. Then the P. & E. Methodists—Campbellites & wandering Baptists were having their meetings. Since I have commenced preaching there, and lecturing occasionally on Temperance, the meetings have been well attended, and a weekly prayer meeting has been commenced and kept up. This out post belongs rather to my White Pigeon than to my Vanburen station.

I received recently one dollar from Mr. Markum for the Home Missionary to whom it has been sent gratuitously since I have been in White Pigeon, and he tells me to have it regularly mailed to him as

heretofore to the White Pigeon Post Office and he will hereafter pay the subscription price.

You will, therefore, credit him one dollar which he has paid me and send me a draft for twenty four dollars for missionary service in Indiana.

Direct, White Pigeon
St. Joseph County
Mich

Yours in the work of the Lord

William Fuller

P.S. Please send me a copy of the last annual report A.H.M.S. by mail.

SETH HARDY

Another missionary who spent most of his active life in Michigan was the Rev. Seth Hardy. We reproduce a long, but interesting letter from this reverend gentleman while he was serving the Presbyterian Church of Owosso in 1844. Hardy had reached Michigan about 1835. One of the first churches served by the Rev. Mr. Hardy was the Presbyterian Church of Stoney Creek, in Augusta Township, Washtenaw County. For about one year, during 1849 and 1850, he served the Comstock Congregational Church, Kalamazoo County, and followed with three years in the Vermontville Congregational Church. He is also listed as one of the ministers who served the Romeo Congregational Church.

He spent the last twenty years of his life in Washtenaw County, and died in Ypsilanti, having nearly reached eighty years of age.

One biographer says of the Rev. Mr. Hardy that "he was a person esteemed for his many fine qualities; always industrious and endeavoring to improve every opportunity for doing good." And a lady member of his congregation at Vermontville considered him "a man of fair ability, possessed of a kindly spirit and good social qualities."

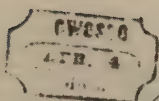
His letter here is quite interesting, particularly his reference to the visiting clergyman, "formerly a presbyterian, but now a babtist, clergyman." Surely the problems confronting these early missionaries were many and varied.

This letter is postmarked at Owosso with the unique townmark of Owosso, dated April 4. The year was 1844.

Owosso Shiwassa Co April 1st 1844

To Messrs Badger and Hall,
Secretaries of the A.H.M.S.

In the good providence of God, I have been able



25
Rev Mr. [unclear] Badger
150 Nassau St.
New-York

to prosecute my labors, another quarter, as a missionary under your Society. Although we can not speak of any remarkable display of Divine grace during the past three months, Still we do not think our labors have been in vain in the Lord. There has evidently been some working up of religious feeling among the members of the church, and a good degree of seriousness, a portion of the time; among the impenitent. We venture to hope there have been two cases of actual conversion. Some 6 or 8 weeks since, there was a good degree of interest and some very deep feeling among my people respecting spiritual things. But unfortunately, amid this state of things, a Mr. Bliss (Blitz ?), formerly a presbyterian, but now a baptist, clergyman, who is an acting agent of the American baptist bible Society, came to this place, to present the bible cause. It was thought not advisable to refuse him a hearing with reference to so important an object as that of publishing & circulating, the bible. He was therefore invited, after preaching saturday evening, to occupy a part of the day on the sabbath. And do you not think, he took that opportunity to come out in a violent tirade against all denominations of christians but his own. He even went so far as to charge those, who practiced baptism by any other mode than immersion, with being false witnesses. We never saw the man before, but received rather an unfavorable impression respecting him while here. His effort in this place, so far from being favorable to the baptist

interest, seems to have been rather the reverse. But its present effects, on the cause of Christ seems to have been bad, in as much as it served to divert the minds of some, who were before seriously impressed, from the great and important subject of the soul's salvation. I can truly say I am sorry the baptist bible Society are so unwise as to send out such a man as their agent. I have no doubt it will be seriously prejudicial to their interest if he manifest elsewhere the same spirit which he did in this place. During the winter one Sabbath School has been kept up with a good degree of interest. So far as the temperance cause is concerned very little has been accomplished among us of late. Oure situation is rather peculiar with reference to that subject. We have no intoxicating liquor sold in this place, and I am not prepared to say that I know of a single intemperate person in our village. Heretofore most of our citizens have been members of a temperance society, but at present we have no temperance society in existance, from the fact that the secretary of the society has moved away, and the records and constitution can no longer be found. But we are to have a temperance meeting in a few days, at which, I trust some action will be taken with reference to this matter.

Although there are but two or three methodist professors in this village, a methodist brother visits this place occasionally and preaches one sermon on the Sabbath. At such time, as we have but one house to meet in, I take the liberty of rideing 3 miles, to Corruna, our county seat, and preaching one half of the day. In that place there are number of presbyterian & congregationalist members, whom I am expecting soon to form into a church. As soon as the traveling will justify it I am intending to visit Byron in the south part of the county, where a church will need to be organized very soon. In the county west of this (that is, Clinton Co) there is no presbyterian or Congregational church. I am expecting to organize one church in that county in the course of a few months. It is very important that a missionary be sent to divide his labors between Clinton county and some destitute places in Shiwassa. Can you not

assist us in sustaining one if he can be procured? Please to inform me.

As this is the time at which a statistical report is required I would simply say, Our Church is termed the Presbyterian Church of Owosso, Shiwassee Co. Hopeful conversions since my removal to this place, 2; but, as yet, none during that time, have been added to the church either by letter or profession. Our sabbath school during the winter has numbered from 30 to 40—has a small library, but owing to some neglect on the part of our secretary, the number of volumes can not be ascertained. In respect to temperance subscribers we can say nothing definite, in consequence of what is already mentioned, (our pledge and records being lost). Have thus far organized no churches, but shall probably organize some two or three during the summer. Since my residence here, no contributions have been taken up for benevolent objects, but there will be in the course of the year. We were expecting to have erected a church this spring, but the winter has been so unfavorable for getting out lumber, that there is some doubt whether we shall be able to erect a house this season, although it is still the intention of the people to do it if possible. In my last, I requested you, for the amount due on my commission, to pay for my Biblical repository & N. York Observer in advance. This I suppose you have done. If so you will please to deduct the same from the amount due me (\$62.50) for the first two quarters of my missionary year, and forward a draft for the remainder.

According to the terms of the New York Observer, the Cerographic maps, issued as a supplement to that paper, are due me—or, to say the least, they are due me, if my paper has been paid for in advance, as requested, through you, by money due me for missionary service for the present & the past year. Untill last year I received reciets regularly by mail from the editor. But last year and this I received no reciet from him, but suppose you have received a reciet, instead of its being forwarded to me, in consequence of the payment being mad through you. The maps, untill the last number published, have been promptly sent me, but

the last thus far fails to come. At my request, our Postmaster has written the editor respecting this matter, but thus far receives no answer. What it means I know not. Will you have the goodness to inquire into the matter, see that the thing is set right, and inform me respecting the reason of this long delay.

Since our removal to this place Mrs. Hardy's health has been rather poor—she had the Michigan fever in the fall. Since our arrival at this place, if I mistake not, she has been able to attend meeting but two Sabbaths. Her sickness has been embarrassing to me in respect to my labors in destitute neighborhoods around us—it has also increased our expenses somewhat. But at present she is getting well & we hope she will soon be able to go abroad. Our prayer is that her sickness may be sanctified to our spiritual good, and may tend to prepare us to be more faithful & devoted in the service of our common Lord. Soliciting an interest in your prayers I subscribe myself yours in the bonds of the Gospel,

Seth Hardy.

P.S. The American Tract Society have been wont to furnish, to missionaries, a certain amount of their tracts, for gratuitous distribution. Do they continue this appropriation. If so, and I can obtain them, they will be of great use to me in my new field of labor. If they are furnished, and you can see them forwarded, be sure to forward a great variety and most of them of the smaller sized tracts, such as 4, 8, 12 or 16 pages, as those I invariably find to be the most useful. I see notice from time to time, in the Home Missionary, of boxes of clothing furnished by the friends of missionary. Clothing we need, and find it rather difficult to obtain it. Could you not send us a small box of clothing. We need and must have some clothes for summer use. We also need underclothes, handkerchiefs, & also clothes for a little one whom the Lord has in mercy seen fit to give us. Let us hear from you respecting this matter.

P.S. Should you forward us a box, please procure for me, a volume, entitled Apostolic baptism by Mr. Taylor and send it in the box, deducting the value of it from my draft.

MARCUS HARRISON

The value of these early missionary letters, from an historical standpoint, is emphasized by this letter from the Reverend Marcus Harrison.

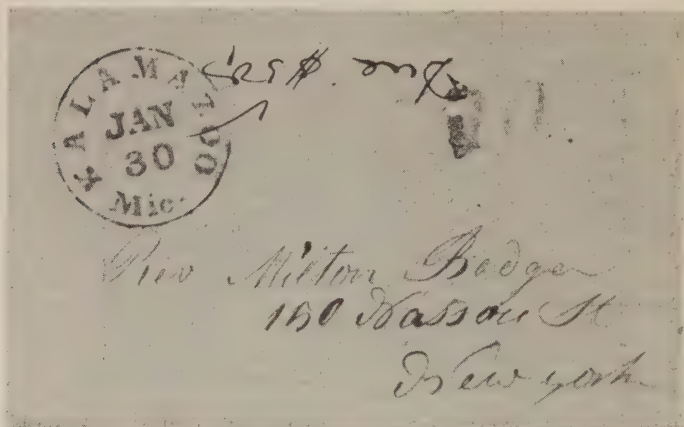
The first efforts to write the history of our Michigan communities were made many years after the events sought to be related actually took place. There can be no question but that the Reverend Marcus Harrison did serve the Presbyterian (later Congregational) Church of Lawrence. He was in the village as early as 1848, having served as a Congregational minister at Jackson as early as 1842. He was a member of the first board of trustees of Marshall College, of which the Reverend John P. Cleaveland was president as we have already observed. Yet a history of Lawrence Township and its church organizations, written in 1880 and included in the history of VanBuren County, omits the name of the Reverend Marcus Harrison as a pastor in that village.

In 1852, two years after he wrote the letter which we reproduce here, the Reverend Marcus Harrison, described in the report as an evangelist, went to nearby Decatur, and there organized the First Presbyterian Church of Decatur. He liked the village, and decided to stay as the pastor of the church, remaining three years. During that time he bought a lot, and erected the frame of a church, which was completed the year after he left that pastorate.

This service to the community followed the pattern to which he refers in his letter, in which he tells of building church houses in Oxford and Groton, New York. He planned to perform the same service for the Lawrence church.

The "Mr. House" of Paw Paw referred to was E. J. House, who was also the postmaster there at the time. "Br McLawren" was the Rev. James McLaurine, the Presbyterian minister at Paw Paw about ten miles distant.

For some reason the letter was mailed at Kalamazoo, some twenty-five miles distant from Lawrence. It bears the red circular townmark of Kalamazoo.



Lawrence, Van Buren Co.
Mich.

To the corresponding Secretaries of the A H M S
Dr sirs

I entered my field of labor in Lawrence on the 20 of Oct on the day of the date of your commission which I received in due time. My labors have been uninterrupted since that time, rarely failing of preaching six times on each week three of which are on sabbaths & three in & school districts, beside attending frequent prayer meetings & conferences.

My health is feeble through protracted bilious habits yet I have failed of no appointment,

Seriousness was manifest soon after I commenced labor here which slowly but constantly increased till the present time,—There are now many seriously impressed who convers freely on their condition & numbers more manifest conviction,

Of the number who have indulged hope I cannot speak with definiteness as of some I stand in doubt,

There are however from 12 to 20, some who had long wandered from a former profession have returned with much apparent penitence,

Among the cases of hope are several heads of families 7 or 8 of much promise of usefulness.

As religion has been verry low here there has been of late no sabbath school & we have not revived one yet as the usual hour for it is occupied with prayer

This has been a strong hold of universalism--some have however of late utterly renounced, while others are still mad upon their Idol,

The church though feeble & few are united---Worldly embarrassment is holding some of them back from an amount of labor and engagedness which I should be happy to see. Congragations are always large as we could expect & would be doubless (doubtless) much larger but for want of room,

Our few responsible ones are talking--not publicly---of a house of worship next summer---It remains with providence however whether it will be ---There is none in this now fast rising village, The principle village owner, a roman catholic lawyer of Paw Paw, told me the other day he would give a lot & as much beyon* as any other man---he will give also if they shall in future get a bell \$50---For the house they hope to receive his pledge. Our plan is to secure the vigor of our young men to score and hew in early spring bringing them all together in the woods---For two meeting houses in former days I furnish all the timber hewn and on the ground without expense but by going into the woods with them, in Oxford & Groton, N. Y.

We leave it all however with the Lord--waiting the developments of his will & providence.

Of the former minister whom you sustained here & who still resides here I feel a delicacy in speaking---I will just say however he attends church regularly and speaks kindly but takes no part, he

is practising medicine. I shall apprise you from time to time of every thing interesting.

With gratitud and Christian love I am yours

Marcus Harrison

Dr sirs having a family on my hands and heart, & son for the two years in the university at An Arbor I have been in straighted circumstances. Mr. House** of Paw Paw a merchant, by request of Br McLawren*** whom I shall ever love with gratitude, kindly advanced me a part of the first quarters installmant on the promise that he should have my first draft when he will let me have the balance. If you can therefore forward me a draft to this place, Lawrence, V. Buren Co Mich It will be a great relief to me & will be greatfully acknowledged.

Yours in the labors & sorrows of the gospel

Marcus Harrison

* beyond

** E. J. House, also postmaster

***Rev. James McLarine, Presbyterian minister at Paw Paw.

OLIVER HILL

Very little data can be found concerning the missionary experience of the Rev. Oliver Hill in Michigan. The history of Augusta Township in Washtenaw County lists him as the third minister to serve the Presbyterian Church in that community, but there the record stops.

The Stoney Creek in Washtenaw County should not be confused with the Stony Creek settlement in Oakland County, now practically extinct, but quite famous in earlier days as the only village in Michigan where a Masonic lodge was kept open during the famous Morgan affair.

The letter from the Rev. Mr. Hill was posted at Ypsilanti, the post office at Stoney Creek not having been established until many years later, in 1862. It bears the circular townmark of Ypsilanti, struck in black.

Stoney Creek, March 20. 1839.

To the Executive Committee of the A.H.M. Society.

Dear Brethren,

I hope to be excused for omitting my quarterly report till this time, as it was done in view of making a communication about those Days.

According to the request in my commission I must transmit the following list of particulars—

1. The name of the church is "Stoney Creek" principally in the town of Augusta, embracing also members in the towns of York, Pitt, & Ypsilanti #post office address is Ypsilanti (#Washtenaw Co. Michigan)
2. Number of hopeful conversions, none to my knowledge.
3. Number added by profession, none.—
4. Number added to the church by letter, 9.—
5. Number of sabbath schools. One—pupils 50—vol. 60.
6. Number of bible class 1, of pupils 15

7. Number of Temperance societies, 1, number of sub. 70.
8. Number of churches organised during the year, I cannot state; only one that I am positive of—that is in Bridgewater belonging to Presbytery of Washtenaw—
9. Contributions to benevolent objects For. M. 18. Home not yet summed up—perhaps the amount as it was last year \$8,00 and for Education \$8,00—total—\$34,00.

I have not much that is new to communicate, The Society has purchased one acre of land for a burying ground & site for a church edifice if needed. Church music has been much improved among us by the aid of a celebrated teacher. I have the most of the time attended three services on each Sabbath, & one and sometimes two religious meeting, either for prayer or preaching, between the Sabbaths. During the past winter we have had very interesting meetings—some of the christians have been quickened, confessed their faults, and seemed to pray with a right spirit. Some impenitent sinners have been solemnized, & more thoughtful; but I have not learned of any conversions among them, & I feel anxious that the Lord would revive his work among us in the midst of these days. Do pray for us.

Your unworthy mis.

Oliver Hill

P.S. Let it be understood the above is designed to embrace the period of just one year previous to this date, March 20th, 1839.—I have received my Home Missionary & Pastor's journal very regular,—The number for December 1838, has not reached me; —if you have that number on hand, & will be convenient for you to send it to me it will be very acceptable.—

O. Hill.

GEORGE HORNELL

One of the missionaries covering much of southern Oakland County in his activities was the Rev. George Hornell. He arrived in the fall of 1828, having reached the area about two years after the arrival of the Rev. Erie Prince, and having preceded the Rev. Ansel Bridgman by about the same length of time. He served various congregations in the area for over a dozen years, and even though a fellow minister referred to him as being "rather dry," still he would have to admit that the Rev. Mr. Hornell was a devoted, energetic, consecrated and faithful missionary.

The first report of his activities, made in 1819, lists the communities or churches which he was serving. These included Auburn, where he was also a director of the local academy; Trowbridge's, which was the Bloomfield Centre area; what is now the Birmingham community, which he describes as "4 miles S E from Trowbridge's;" the Wing Lake church; Niles Corners, which we know today as Troy; and the church at Pontiac. His energy is indicated by his suggestion that he would preach at two of these churches each Sunday, thus covering them all in a period of three weeks.

In 1831 he assisted in a revival meeting in Ypsilanti. Later, in 1833, he was serving the churches at Farmington and Plymouth. In the spring of 1833 he supplied the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church of Detroit, there being a vacancy in the pulpit in that church at the time. During his pastorate in Farmington he lived at West Farmington.

In the spring of 1834 Hornell left the Farmington church, and took over the church at Auburn, which had been the scene of one of his first pastorates, but even so, he continued to do some preaching at Plymouth. In 1841 and 1842 he served the Birmingham church.

We reproduce five letters from the Rev. George Hornell, all of them written in territorial days. These five letters provide us with rare postal markings from the territorial post offices of Bloomfield, Pontiac, West Farmington and Auburn, of which latter there are two.

Bloomfield, Oakland Co., M.T.

April 9th, 1829.

Mr. Absalom Peters,
Cor. Sec. of the A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir:

Your communication dated Jan.y 6th containing my prayer that I may deeply participate in the spirit wh. dictated the valuable instructions contained in that communication & that by Divine grace I may be enabled to realize the hopes of the Committee.

I have laboured with this people since the 10th of Nov. last. This church now contains sixty five members; twenty two of whom are males. They are spread over a wide surface; & hence it is necessary for me to preach in several different places. By referring to a map of Michigan Ter. you will be able to ascertain the situation of those places; the first at Auburn village or Smith's Mills, three miles below Pontiac; the 2d at Trowbridges, three miles South of Auburn;- the 3.d 4 miles S.E. from Trowbridge's.

But it has been thought expedient to alter this arrangement, so as to include two other places, viz. Pontiac & Niles corners.

There is still another important station, at Wing Lake, 4 miles west of Trowbridge's, where there is a good audience, & the people are the more anxious for orthodox preaching as they feel -- ? -- annoyed by a society of Universalists who have hitherto held stated meetings there, once in two weeks.

I calculate, during the insuing summer, to preach in two of those places on every Sabbath, wh.

will compass the six, in three weeks. Still, I shall find myself under some embarrassment; for I hope to get into operation several Sabbath schools & bible classes wh. will require considerable of my attention.

I am much gratified with the desire that is manifested every where to hear the preaching of the word, & often with the solemn attention that is paid to it.

I have administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper three times, at as many different places & Sabbath after next is appointed for the fourth. I have been called to preach four funeral sermons.

In the neighborhood where I reside, wh. is near Trowbridge's (see map) we have kept a Sabbath School in operation during the winter. The teachers constitute a bible class who meet every thursday evening at my house to consult together upon the Sab. school lesson & for prayer. The improved system of Sab. schools is known only by report in this county, & I presume, for the Ter. generally. The Sab. School in my neighborhood exhibits an example of it with the exception of the library; wh. I have no doubt will be procured soon after the opening of navigation.

I have endeavoured to attend to the important duty of family visitation, as I have found time & opportunity, & I have to regret that I cannot devote more time to it. Experience impresses upon me more & more forcibly a sense of its utility. I find here & there one, labouring under greater or less anxiety for the concerns of the soul, who would be passed by unnoticed, if the state of their feelings were not discovered by personal conversation with them.

We formed a Temperance Society toward the close of Feb. last; & yesterday we had our second meeting at Auburn, where I gave a public address on the occasion. We have twenty five members & the prospect of accessions to our number is favorable. I have observed a constant & increasing movement on the minds of the people, in favour of the cause of Temperance, from its commencement to the present time.

A number of our good people have engaged in the cause, with such zeal & wisdom & prudence & kind feeling, as must insure success. Opposition is disarmed & sits down in silence.

The monthly concert for prayer, is observed in four places within the bounds of the church—Weekly prayer meetings in three places.

There is no special excitement within the bounds of the Church, but there are a few individuals in different parts who appear to be anxiously concerned.

We have to lament that the church as a body is in a cold lukewarm state. It is my own fault—in a measure at least. But if I am not deceived I feel that I can never rest till we shall awake to the infinite worth of souls, & unitedly come before the throne of grace with such a devout & importunate spirit of prayer as will not let the God of Israel go till he shall display his glory in a revival of pure religion.

I am affectionately yours in the bonds of the
gospel,

George Hornell.

* * * * *

Bloomfield, Oakland Co. M.T.
July 25th, 1830.

Bro. & Dear Sir

I have the satisfaction to inform you that during my labours for the last quarter my efforts to promote Sabbath Schools have succeeded far beyond my expectations. We have now eight schools in operation comprising about 200 children. Mostly all of them, are formed on such a permanent basis, that I think there is very little danger of their being discontinued—except some of them during the winter season. For want of comfortable house for their meetings.

They have formed & subscribed - -?- - consti-
tutions, & made provision for Sab. school libraries.

It is matter of devout gratitude to God that he has turned the hearts of the people so much to this subject. The village of Pontiac, the county seat, has long been noted for infidelity & wickedness. It has heretofore been impracticable to keep up a Sab. School long there—& until last spring I had the smallest congregation in that village—& last winter I removed my appointment for a time from that place because so few attended—But now it is by far the largest of the six to which I preach.

They have a Sab. school of 40 children & have subscribed nearly \$30 for a Sab. sch. library—The whole amt. subscribed by the proprietors of all the schools is not far from \$100.

There is no special excitement within the bounds of my labours, but a few anxious inquiring after the preaching of the word is well attended at all my appointments. I have long felt the importance of a systematic distribution of tracts in my field of labour. I should have attempted something long ago for this purpose, but for want of means to procure tracts. But few seem to appreciate the value of tracts; & few are comparatively poor.

I feel as tho it ought not to be delayed & yet I do not think it prudent to call upon the people to raise a fund for tracts, since they have just done so liberally for Sab. sch. libraries. I know no other way but to apply to the tract Society for a donation to begin with; and that I confidently believe will prepare the way to form a large & efficient tract Society, wh. will afterwards support itself as well as set the example to others around to go & do likewise.

I do not expect the Am. T. Society can gratuitously supply all such destitute places. But this case I think is peculiar & urgent. I would receive it as a great favour if you would take the trouble to make an application to the Tract Depository in your city in my behalf.

I would represent to them that my design is ultimately to extend the system of monthly tract

distribution as far as, with the blessing of God, is possible in this destitute country—destitute in a great measure of all means of salvation. But at present the people are not ripe for it.

Let it once be commissioned & the people will awake to it as they have to the subject of sab. schls. Let me present some of the features of the case:

This country is new---the State Society is in its infancy but is rapidly populating & soon will be populous & rich. There is now a mighty struggle for ascendancy between truth & error---sin & virtue; & the friends of God have need to call up every auxiliary, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

There are many universalists & deists whose zeal & activity would do honor to a better cause---Infidel sentiments are propagated by conversation & by newspapers. If it is known that a person has any extraordinary seriousness he is sure to be visited by Messengers of error, & plied by their specious & promiscuous arguments. In conversing with individuals I frequently hear those stale arguments against future punishment & other scriptural doctrines wh. too plainly betray their origin. And I am often grieved to find, expecially with young people, a bias forming in favor of error. Tracts would find access to all classes of people; & would be read by many who would have almost no other means of salvation.

The supply of orthodox preaching is very scanty; & tracts if regularly distributed, would go far to make up this deficiency.

With regard to the quantity that I would solicit---I could distribute a large amount to good advantage; but I have in view three places wh. are more peculiarly important for reasons above stated. In those three places I should like to supply 50 families in each of those places, with a tract every month, i.e. 150 families to be supplied 12 months, & so assorted that I can give out the same tract to each family at each distribution, would require 1800 tracts. But I would submit it to the Tract Society, whether to send me none, or so many as may be

consistent in their estimation. Should they be pleased to send them, they will direct them to me at Detroit, in care of Rice & Bingham.

You will be pleased to pay the editor of the New York Observer \$2,50 cts. the price of his paper for one year, on my account, as I have commenced taking his paper.

Yours very affectionately

George Hornell.

Rev. Absalom Peters.

* * * * *

Post to Farmington town N.H. 8/3
Apr 24 *25*
[Signature]
Rev. Absalom Peters
Cor. Sec. A. H. M. S.
No. 150 Nassau St.
New York

Farmington Oak'd Co. M.T.
April 16th, 1834—

Rev. & Dear Sir

I commenced my labours in a presbyterian society in this town, & in another in Plymouth, an adjoining town, about the 25th Dec. last under your commission for me to labour at Adrian, & according to your letter directed to me at Plymouth, last summer, in which you allowed me to labour at those two places, instead of Adrian.

The reason I did not commence at those places sooner, was, that last spring I was engaged for a few weeks in Detroit, (that Church being destitute

of a minister,) till they should be able to get one from the East. They did not get a minister however till the middle of October. Then at the request of the Sunday School Soc'y I took an agency for them for two months; at the expiration of wh. I repaired to my present field. I have laboured one month under the commission for Adrian; in the mean time I left it with Mr. Hastings of Detroit to apply for a commission to bear date 26th Jan. 1834, the time that my Adrian commission would expire. This commission has not yet arrived.

The centres of the two societies with which I now labour, are about five miles apart. They are in a fertile part of the country & incorporated with an enterprizing population. The settlements have principally been made within eight years. On the same ground there are large societies of Baptists & Methodists. The Presb. Church in Farmington contains about thirty five members; that at Plymouth about thirty. In each Society there is an organized bible Society, wh. originated since I came here. I found a Sab. School in operation in Farmington wh. still continues, & one has been formed in the Plymouth Society. There has also a tract distribution been instituted in each Society, to distribute once a month. The monthly concert for prayer is observed by both Societies; & each church sustains two prayer meetings per week. I preach three times on the Sabbath alternately in each Society, & during the week visit from house to house & visit schools, & lecture, more or less. The Society in Farmington are building a meeting house 40 x 20 feet, where we expect to commence meetings for worship in about a month.

There has been no special excitement in either society since I have been here. The prospect however is encouraging. There is & has been, a good attendance on preaching; there is a solemn attention, & frequently indications of deep feeling.

My field is large; the three nearest ministers of our order are ten, fourteen & twenty miles from the places where I preach. And the people are of every character. I purpose to make excursions during the week in different directions to preach

Christ to those "scattered abroad as sheep having no Shepherd."

Please send my "Home Missionary" to West Farmington. You will charge me with one dollar, and credit the sum to Mrs. Wosker (?) of Farmington for the Home Missionary. She wishes it to be discontinued.

Affectionately yours in the bonds of the gospel

George Hornell

Rev. Absalom Peters

* * * * *

Auburn, Oakland Co. M.T.

Oct. 26th, 1834

Rev. & Dear Sir

Since my last report I have continued my labours with the two societies at Farmington & Plymouth much as usual: preaching three times on the Sabbath, occasionally lecturing at different places on week days, visiting from house to house, visiting schools attending prayer meetings, & .

We have recently held a protracted meeting in Farmington which continued four days. Rev. John P. Cleaveland of Detroit was with us two days & rendered important assistance. We trust much good has been done. Our new meeting house was dedicated on the first day of the meeting.

There is a prospect of my being installed & permanently settled over one or the other of these churches soon.

The state of religious feeling in both societies is low, though the Farmington church appears to be some what revived since the meeting. Deep impressions also appear to have been made upon the minds of some half dozen unbelievers. My prospect for usefulness I think is promising, in those places.

I remain

Your affect'te brother &
fellow labourer

Rev. Absalom Peters

George Hornell

Auburn M. T.
May 8

JB-

Rev. Absalom Peter

Cor. Sec. A. H. M. S.

No. 150 Nassau Street

New York.

Auburn, Oakland Co. M.T.

April 26th, 1835

Rev. & Dear Sir.

I continued my labours as usual in Plymouth & Farmington till some time in February last, when I left off preaching at Farmington & commenced preaching in this village half the time, with the concurrence of your committee. So that I am now preaching at this place & Plymouth alternately. The reasons for my making this exchange, were these.

The church at this place had been for some time in a weak & broken state on account of the removal of some of their members, the death of others, & of others still, having joined newly formed churches in the vicinity. But they have recently gathered more strength & resolved to rally & stand their ground against the powers of darkness, & try once more to support the ordinances of the gospel for half the time at least. They asked & obtained the consent of the church & congregation at Farmington for me to leave that place for Auburn. And although it was important that Farmington should be supplied, it appeared more important that this place should be, considering circumstances. Besides--the people here happened to be united in requesting me to labour here, & had failed in an

attempt to make up a subscription for another & several refused to subscribe any thing for any one but me. Since I commenced here there has been a good attendance on the sabbath, & good impressions have evidently been made on the minds of many. One man, a prominent man in society, who has indulged some hope for several years, has become so far established that he has determined to make a public profession of religion, & I expect will unite with the church. Others are more or less anxious. Our prayer meetings have been very interesting. We have a conference in the evening of the sabbath I preach here, which is also very interesting. These I do not attend, being absent at a meeting $2\frac{1}{2}$ ms. out, & at a place where there has hitherto been but little preaching, but where they give good attendance & some feeling is manifested. The prospect of my doing good here is encouraging, & more so, I think, than ever it has been.

In Plymouth things remain much in statu quo. The congregation rather increases. There has appeared at times a good deal of solemnity. There are some inquiring minds, but no conversions that I know of since my last report.

I have received no commission yet for the current year. My commission expired with the 25th Jan'y last. I wrote in season to Mr. Hastings of Detroit to forward an application for me. I saw Br. Cleaveland (one of your committee) recently & he assured me that a commission would be procured & I have therefore ventured to give a draught for the quarter ending this day.

I remain your fellow labourer in the vineyard
of the Lord

George Hornell

Rev. Absolom Peters.

P.S. A Sabbath school is going into operation in this place which had been suspended for the winter & I hope a bible class. The No. of the Home Missionary calling for an annual statistical report, arrived while I was absent on a journey to White Pigeon to wh. place I was called by the death of a sister. I did not get it till it was too late for my report to reach you in season.

G. H.

HARVEY HYDE

The Rev. Harvey Hyde, a Congregational minister coming to Michigan soon after statehood, served several churches of the state during his ministry.

Before going to the Congregational Church of Rochester, from which he wrote the letter which we here reproduce, he served the Presbyterian Church of Saginaw, as stated supply from 1842 to 1844, where he convinced the younger members of his congregation that they should change their denomination to Congregational, which was done. Later it appears that he served, possibly as a supply, at the churches of both Allegan and Kalamazoo. His successor at Rochester was the Rev. Orson Parker.

This letter from Mr. Hyde was mailed at Rochester, and bears the red circular handstamp of that post office. Surely one cannot question the sincere devotion to the cause, or the unselfishness of this man, after reading his letter. It is quite typical of the unselfishness which for the most part characterized these early missionaries.

Rochester 13 May 1845

Dear brethren

This report brings me to the close of the year covered by my commission. During the year I have lost not a single sabbath, nor appointment of any kind by sickness, and this church has been called to lay only one of its members in the grave. That was an aged man (82) converted about 7 years ago, who had been since that time an unusually growing Christian. He was blind & dreadfully afflicted with a cancer, but in the midst of his trials, grace & Christian patience triumphed. He anxiously desired to see a revival here before he departed, but it was not granted him. Since his death however there has been an obvious increase of prayer & a tenderness of feeling, at least with some, unknown before. We have felt that the Lord was very near us with offered blessings, but also I fear we shall grieve him away. The Church had sunk into a fearful

degree of coldness & past difficulties had well nigh been its ruin. Indeed when I came here the people were almost discouraged as to any attempt to sustain the preaching of the gospel. The members were scattering to other denominations or to the world. In consequence of these difficulties two of our members were dismissed to join the Methodists soon after I came, one of these was among our strongest men, as to pecuniary support. Thus were we weakened & brought low. But the Lord has been gracious, several have been added to our members, & the old difficulties seem to be nearly all removed. The people are anxious that I should settle as their Pastor. They say that if I leave them they shall be too weak & too much discouraged to make another attempt. I have no doubt the effect would be disastrous & I shall certainly remain, if I can obtain the means of living. But I cannot live on the sum I have received the past year (nominally \$350) paid most of it in all sorts of things the people can best spare, without getting in debt & that conscience will not allow me to do, even if (I) must resort to the labor of my hands to avoid it. Many young men are now usually with us on the Sabbath who have not been in the habit of attending meeting, & some of them have subscribed for my support the next year according to their little means. For this I thank God & take courage, though their contributions do not at present make up for those who went off or were cut off. While therefore our congregation has been steadily increasing, their pecuniary ability has never been so small as now. We believe it will not long remain so, but for the present I cannot remain here without the aid of your Society & I fear we shall be compelled to ask for an increased amt for the year to come. Besides preaching in this village there are two or three small & destitute churches in the vicinity which a few of us attempt to look after & supply partially as we can. There is yet much land to be possessed on all sides of us. My work this year may be compared to the work of taking up an old farm that has long lain waste. The walls & fences must be rebuilt the weeds destroyed, the soil prepared & a long work be done before any crop can be reaped. We have not gathered the harvest,

but we trust the seed is sown & the ground prepared & if God add his blessing we hope for glorious results. Our Bible Class for the study of Doctrines systematically, we think promises most richly to repay the care bestowed upon it.

I have received \$1.75 more of the subscription taken previous to my last report for Home Missions; & this amount I wish you to deduct from the amount now due me which is \$25.00 The balance I shall be glad to receive at your earliest convenience. I remain as ever cordially & fraternally

Yours

Harvey Hyde

ELIHU P. INGERSOLL

The Rev. Elihu P. Ingersoll, author of the following letter, was not new to Michigan when this letter was written.

His brother, Erastus S. Ingersoll, had come to Michigan in the early 1830s from the ancestral home in Ontario County, New York, and had settled briefly in Farmington, Oakland County. In 1836 he moved on to Eaton County, then almost a total wilderness, taking up land in Delta Township, through which flowed the Grand River. Here he built himself a log cabin, and shortly thereafter he constructed a dam across the Grand and erected a saw mill. The settlement was to become known later as Delta Mills.

About the same time, the Rev. Elihu P. Ingersoll was occupying the position of professor of music at Oberlin College, Ohio, and also was serving as principal of the preparatory school of the college. The founder of the college, who later also founded Michigan's Olivet College, was the Rev. John Shipherd, and he was serving as pastor of the Oberlin church. Encouraged by philanthropists in the East, both Shipherd and Ingersoll resigned their posts at Oberlin, and, with certain other interested parties, visited the settlement begun by Ingersoll's brother in Delta Township, with the view of founding a college there to be known as The Grand River Seminary. This was to be a manual training or agricultural school, in contrast to the classical and cultural college at Oberlin.

The visitors were enthusiastic about the Delta prospects. Erastus Ingersoll gave encouragement. A village known as Grand River City was actually platted and a 40-acre site, to be known as Franklin Square, was set aside for the college campus. The Rev. Elihu P. Ingersoll was induced to travel to the East and solicit funds for this new venture. He did

succeed in obtaining substantial subscriptions for the project, and its success seemed assured. But the financial Panic of 1837 came upon the country, the subscriptions could not be paid and the school was never established.

There is little record to show just what occupied the time of the Rev. Mr. Ingersoll between the time of the failure of the college project and his pastorate at Mt. Clemens. His nephew, writing thirty years later, states that his uncle remained with the college plan until 1841, when he became convinced that it was a lost cause. He apparently did not go to Mt. Clemens until late in 1843, as his letter of May 17, 1845, states that he had served the Mt. Clemens church "for a year and a half."

With his previous experience at Delta and with relatives living there, it was quite natural that Ingersoll would like to accept the call from the Delta congregation. His brother Erastus was unquestionably the outstanding citizen of that entire area, and he would exert a very helpful influence in the life of the church.

It would appear that the importunities of Mr. Ingersoll, as set forth in his letter, resulted in the extending of aid by the American Home Missionary Society. The early records of Delta Township do reveal that the first minister of the gospel there was the Rev. E. P. Ingersoll. His letter follows.

Mt. Clemens May 17, 1845

To the Secretaries of the A.H.M. Society
Gentlemen,

In compliance with the desires of others as well as my own sence of duty, I send you this line. Some time last winter, either the last of February or the 1st of March, Father Ruggles of Pontiac, wrote you in behalf of aid for a nascent but feeble church in Eaton County of this state—making known to you their condition, desires, etc, and

requesting of you as the agents of the A.H.M.S. \$150.00 for myself whom they had called to be their pastor. As (the request) this letter has not been acknowledged in either of the No's. of the Home Missionary, Father Ruggles thinks that it has either not been received or perhaps may be more probable is mislaid, for future action. By his counsel, therefore, I send you this to learn whether the letter referred to has been rec'd—And if so whether it is sufficiently full & explicit to enable the committee to act upon its request? If it is desired that all the particulars expressed in your publication should be complied with, they can be, although it would subject us to some delay & trouble & perhaps expense.

As the church, (or people) for they can hardly be called a church as yet) at Delta are waiting with much anxiety & longing for the return of my answer to their call, which is conditioned on the fact of receiving aid from the A.H.M. So. they desire as well as myself a decision may be made on the subject soon. But this I am not able to do, until your answer is rec'd, unless I return to them a negative. And this I feel unwilling to do when I consider the great destitution of the people & the region round about them. For, as was said in Father Ruggles' letter, there is no Cong'l or presbyterian minister within twenty miles in the nearest direction. While there are several important villages & settlements within the territory which must be wholly left to the influence of the Adversary, so far as much religious influence is concerned unless aid be had from A.H.M. So. And if there was ever a people & region for whom the Home Ms. Society was designed, that people, & that region it seems to us, is emphatically the one. For unless aid be obtained they die, or rather never live. Unless aid be obtained no Cong'l or Presbyterian Minister can be comfortably sustained there And there a work of infidelity & Romanism are going on at an alarming extent. Already has a large settlement of German Romanists been made there, about 15 miles from Delta, & this season a large accession is expected from Germany. Again, that people at Delta is the only community where any thing like a permanent footing can at present be secured. There they

propose & do all they can, & on beyond their strength. For at a late visit, I made to this place, they raised by subscription for building me a house, if I would settle among them, \$230. to be paid in labor, lumber, etc. No money. They also donated 20 acres of land for a parsonage on the same condition & became responsible for one day sustenance—as far as food was concerned. But not for raiment. They cannot raise money, & Raiment costs money. I felt for them, in their deep anxiety, & promised if aid should be obtained from the A.H.M.S. I would accept their call, & assume to myself the burden of this new country. The community as yet is small at Delta, owing to the fact of a large tract of country being "located" by speculators, which has hitherto very much retarded immigrants. But now the tide is beginning to set in that direction again with a new impulse. My congregation on the day I spent there, was about 40 souls. Some 15 or 18 of these are professing Christians of Cong's order, & desire to be immediately organized into a church. Will you please therefore, answer this, as soon as may be consistent, that I may be able to return an answer to them.

Your brother in obedience to the command of the Savior to preach the gospel to every creature.

E. P. Ingersoll

P.S. I have been preaching to the Cong's Ch. of Mt. Clemens for a year & a half & am desired to remain here. But I consider the call from Delta the more important field of duty. Because here are two churches of the same order originally & divided only on a matter of building a meeting house & it seems wrong & wicked that they should have two ministers of the same faith when so large a field has none. And although we have not been able yet to unite these two bodies, yet I do not despair of this.

If you send on a commission to me I desire to leave here & remove to Delta as soon as practicable.

E. P. Ingersoll

WILLIAM JONES

The Rev. William Jones was active in the very early days of the church, in fact, even in territorial days. While the Rev. Ira Mason Wead was probably the first regular minister to the church at Ypsilanti, there is some evidence to the effect that the Rev. William Jones also served that people, probably before Wead took over as the regular minister. As early as 1831 Jones crossed the Territory and began a very active, though controversial, missionary effort in what is now Kalamazoo County. He was instrumental in forming churches at Comstock, Galesburg and Gull Lake. He later went further west, and helped organize the Presbyterian church at Allegan, becoming the first minister of that congregation in 1835.

The two letters from Jones which we reproduce here, though datelined at Gull Prairie, were mailed from the territorial post office of Geloster, (now Richland), and bear the rare town mark of that office, in manuscript.

Gull Prairie Feb 16 1832

Rev & dear Sir

About three months since I forwarded a report of my missionary labours up to that time Which report I have not seen noted in your list of letters received

It was committed to other hands & as I learn was delayed for some time on account of a failure in the transportation of the Mail. You may not have received it at all. —If not as soon as I can in any way know I will make another report, including said time

During the present quarter nothing peculiarly interesting has transpired. I have as before preached at Gull Prairie—at Bronson the county seat of Kalamazoo—at Comstock—4 miles east & at Holland.* In the three latter the prospects are

constantly brightening---congregations are weekly increasing---the singing is of an excellent quality---the hearers are attentive & respectful. They express much gratitude for the aid you are affording.

I have full faith to believe that this wilderness will soon bud and blossom as the rose.

In the latter place of the four above named, and in the vicinity there are a number of church members of our order who emigrated mostly from Vermont. It is contemplated to organize a church at the opening of the Spring there. Much kind hospitality and respectful attention I have received from them.

As to the people at Gull I can but coincide with the views of brother Humphrey that God has a scourge in reserve for this people neighborhood strife & animosities prevail which seem beyond human power to reach. The reputed Dea. from Rhode Island as mentioned in a former epistle proves to be as I then expected by no means a peaceable citizen. He wishes to sell & remove, if a few more would do the same we might have a choice Society---The Lord reigns & will order all things well.

Yours truly

* Now Vicksburgh. The W. Jones
present Holland in Ottawa
County was established later
in the state's history.

Gelaster M.S.
Dec 18th

25

Rev. Abner P. Jones
Gen. Sec. of N. H. A.

1644 Avenue Street

New York

ebol

Reverend Sir,

Nearly 6 months have elapsed since my commission as a Missionary of the A.H.M. Society of which you are the Supervisor expired.

About the time of its expiration I wrote you a history of my Mission in this field of labour & forwarded it by mail—As I have not had any intimation of its reception I suspect it never reached you.

When my term of Commission had ended I fully resolved knowing from the annual report, the state of your Treasury that it was very considerably overdrawn—to struggle along by my own personal efforts, & besides supporting my family by manual labour to do all that I could in preaching the gospel to the destitute of this section, I feel a deep anxiety with you in your embarrassments. I pant for the prosperity of a Society so truly Apostolic in its principles as that of the H. Missionary. & am ready to make any retrenchments & sacrifices, consistent on my part for its prosperity therefore I did not apply for further aid.

I began the year aimed at the strictest economy both in wearing apparel & in food—disposed of my horse on which I rode—traveled on foot from neighbourhood to neighbourhood—alternately preached at 3 different places--two of which were from 8 to 10 miles distant & the third 30 miles—compelled by necessity I have spent most of the interval between going & returning from my tours in hard labour for the purpose of getting the necessities of living for my family.

For several months I have thus struggled & toiled, without aid from any quarter. I well know that you were ready to do to the extent of your ability—yea, more, for the needy, but knowing the state of your treasury I determined not to ask it, & felt a peculiar delicacy in asking assistance from the people among whom I laboured—because I well know that in this region alike as in every place where a motley mass of minds have been suddenly thrown together from various parts of the

world, & a majority perhaps from the less favoured portions of it—that there existed a settled prejudice against what they term hirelings in the Gospel or those who receive a compensation for preaching—the least suggestion might be construed into a mercenary speech seeking pay & not the good of souls. I thought best to have nothing done which might be thus misconstrued—but have been gradually opening the way—and quite recently of their own accord they have begun to do—I shall therefore receive some aid for the future from the people—though at present it will be but a little—they have but just begun to creep—

After a trial of 6 months I am thoroughly convinced that I cannot, both preach the Gospel and farm it during the week—that the work of the ministry demands my all—and here especially where the field of labour is so extensive & the whole work of collecting, modeling & organizing Society & church to go through with. I must therefore, with the greatest reluctance, again look imploring to you for further aid. Can you extend the hand of help or not? There are multitudes who are wandering their way in darkness, & will soon stumble on the "dark mountains" no more to rise unless recovered soon. Oh! must they perish must they all perish !!

I am now preaching alternately at the Kalamazoo Prairie—at Brunson (Bronson)—the county seat, & at Prairie Ronde. In each of these places there is a fair prospect by persevering efforts of building up respectable churches & congregations.

I have already attended to the organization of a church on Prairie Ronde. It was formed on the second Sabbath in Nov. It consists of 5 members—3 male & 2 female—about as many more will soon join, after obtaining letters of dismission from other sister churches. The church was formed strictly on the principle of entire abstinence from ardent spirits, & becomes a subject of discipline in case of violation.

Here dear sir is a small church a little light amid surrounding darkness. On and about the skirts

of this Prairie according to authentic statistics there are not less than twelve hundred souls. The most of them are emigrants from Pennsylvania, Kentucky & the bleak plains of Ohio---You can judge a little of their character, & from the knowledge of mankind that you already have can decide at once that they will never love the gospel unless it is made known to them by carrying it to their own doors. "How shall they hear without a Preacher & how shall shall they preach except they be sent?"

And now can you send them the gospel? Messrs. Hastings & Wells of Detroit will probably apply to you soon for aid.

Your servant in the Gospel

William Jones.

P.S. Michigan Territory in its length & breadth without an exception I believe is Home Missionary ground---Its principles are preferred to the Assembly Board. We have endeavoured to keep the bond of Union in there in the Western Section of the Territory---may it prevail.

J. GEORGE KANOUSE

Although he is not mentioned in the letter which we reproduce from the officers of the Saline Presbyterian Church, notations on the cover show that Rev. J. George Kanouse was the minister at that church during the period mentioned in the letter. This is one of the best constructed letters which we have shown here. The sentence structure is excellent, the choice of words unusual, and altogether it is a very well written letter.

The Rev. J. George Kanouse was nearing the end of his pastorate with the Saline church when this letter was written. The records differ somewhat as to the exact date when he reached this Washtenaw County community. Both sources studied, however, agree that it was around 1834 or 1835 when Kanouse organized the Presbyterian Churches at both Saline and Lodi Plains, two or three miles to the northwest.

Kanouse served the Saline congregation for twelve years. Most of the officers whose names are signed to this letter were prominent in the early life of the Saline settlement.

Endorsements from the Rev. Wm. S. Curtis, of the Ann Arbor church, and from the Rev. I. M. Wead of the Ypsilanti Church are appended. Mr. Wead qualifies his endorsement, somewhat, and his long service in that entire area qualifies him to have some opinions of his own on the matter.

Saline Michigan Oct 8th 1844

Dear Brethren

The undersigned, Elders & deacons of the Presbyterian Church of Saline, Michigan regret the necessity which urges them to apply again for aid from your Society.

We feel that we are already under great obligations to the friends of Home Missions, & that



*American Home Miss. Society
150 Nassau St
New York,*

your aid has been very long continued. We also feel that it would be far more desirable to be large contributors to your funds rather than thus renewedly to solicit relief.

Our circumstances however prove very different from what we hoped, in consequence of the great pecuniary pressure that still continues in this community, & the unusual deficiency in the wheat crop in all this region: this is our main dependance for raising money but proves less than one half a common crop.

Altho we have subscriptions which if collected would nearly pay the remaining debt contracted in building our church yet we cannot expect to accomplish it this year.

In view of these & other circumstances we forward this application pledging ourselves to raise at least one third of the amt. which you may see proper to apply to our ch. & we hope you may not consider it necessary materially to reduce the sum below what we have received during the last 4 years.

With the expression of our grateful feelings
we are respectfully your brethren.

Wm. M. Gregory
Eli H. Swan

Albert Gaston
John Lawrence
Wm. A. Beers

I cordially recommend the above application & hope
the wants of the brethren will be supplied.

Wm. S. Curtis

Ann Arbor Oct 12th—1844

I feel that the church at Saline ought to do
more to sustain Br Kanouse; Still there are many
that exert themselves, and do what they can. Br.
Kanouse must be sustained. If his people will not
do it I feel that it is best for your Society to
continue this aid as far as is necessary to do it
—I therefore endorse the application.

Truly yours

I. M. Wead

Ypsilanti 12th Oct. 1844

* * * * *

Saline Sept 19th 1833.

Dear Brother in Christ

A little branch of Zion planted as we trust by
the right hand of the most high God; were disposed,
and as we humbly believe, under the guidance and by
the direction of his holy spirit, left the land of
our Fathers, for this western world. In 1831, a
few Christian families, some members of which, were
the professed followers of Jesus, 12 in number,
having devoted themselves to the service of their
Lord, and vowed to be his, were, organized into a
church, and after commending ourselves to the
protection of any overruling providence, and without
an under shepherd to go before us, we located in
this moral wilderness. But we trust the Redeemer
was with us; We had his word which was a lamp to
our feet, and a light to our paths. We read the
promises, and believe he is faith(f)ul, who hath

said, the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. In view of these truths we laboured, and we prayed that the Lord would send forth labourers into his harvest. During this summer a man sent out by the Assembly Board of Missions spent a few weeks, but without any apparent blessing. From this time, untill the spring of 1833 we have had no preaching, But now the Lord moved the heart of his servant, the Rev Mr. Wells of Tecumseh to hold a protracted meeting in this town, The church came together; the spark of grace which had become almost extinct was now kindled to a flame, and we for the first time sat down at the table of our common Lord. It was to us a rich feast, for the great head of the church was there, with his blessing christians were humble, and prayerfull; and sinners who were then anxiously enquiring what they should do to be saved we trust will now be found among that blood bought company, who through much tribulation have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. In state of the church the Rev Mr. Hornell found us; who laboured successfully for a few sabbaths, but on account of ill health was obliged to leave this field. Our hearts were revived by occasional drops of mercy; now and then a soul, has we trust been born and the Lord has in mercy added to our strength as well as numbers. forty have united with this branch of Christ. There are about seventy professing Christians, in thirty nine families but as we have not the stated preaching of the word many have not united with this church. After Mr. H left here, The Rev Mr Bouton (Boughton) has supplied this church one third of the time for about four months; will preach about 2 more when we expect again to be destitute. Now if you can estimate the value of 2000 precious immortal souls you have the worth of the gospel in this town, and who will come, and preach repentance, to these impenitent souls; who under God shall be the happy instrument of converting these souls from the error of his wayes, and saving this multitude, from death. Christians! our appeal is to you; to your sympathies to your prayers; and your benevolence. We are poor but think we can raise \$300, and trust

that the Lord will rain down righteousness upon (us); will dispose the hearts of this people to give of their substance into the treasury of the Lord; so that we shall soon do much more for the gospel. We think this an interesting field, all white for the reaper—who will gather it? or who can calculate the amount of good that a faithful servant of the Lord can accomplish here. Will you not send us help? the Lord will fully reward you; if we never can. Trust in him and do good. Come over and help us, and the Lord shall be your reward.

Jacob Cook
David Hathaway
Peter cook

Elders

we the undersigned being personally acquainted with the Rev J G Kanouse of Newjersey Do heartily Request of the American Home Missionary Society that you would devise means to send him on to this field. We think from our personal acquaintance with him he is well calculated to build up Zion's kingdom here.

Peter Cook	Iac Cook
A Cook	David G. Mount
John Kanouse	Isaac Hathaway
	David Hathaway
	Ira Hathaway

CHARLES KELLOGG

The Rev. Charles Kellogg served the First Congregational Church of Almont for at least four years, beginning the latter part of the year 1846. We reproduce two of his letters, the first one written in August of 1848, in which he mentions the fact that he has just completed his "seventh quarter" at the Almont church. His second letter was written in November of 1850 from the same church, so it can be safely assumed that he served this people continuously from the fall of 1846 until the end of the year 1850, at least.

It seems strange that there is not more mention of this minister in the records of the period which are available for study. In his 1850 letter he mentions the fact that he had been connected with the American Home Missionary Society for nine years. Part of that time may have been served in some state other than Michigan, although there is some mention of Kellogg having served the Presbyterian Church at Port Huron, but just when that was, or for how long a period, does not appear.

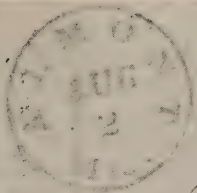
His letters are well written, and give indication of a faithful, earnest and devoted minister. The first letter carries a manuscript marking from Almont in red, while the second letter bears the circular handstamp of that same post office, struck in red.

Almont. Lapeer Co. Michigan
August 1st, 1848

To the Secretaries of the American
Home Missionary Society

Dear Brethren.

The quarter which closed yesterday has embraced the busiest season of the year with the most of my people including, as it does, the planting, haying and harvesting seasons. It



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Rev Charles Hall
150 Nassau St
New York

could hardly be expected, therefore, that the degree of interest which has prevailed in the church & congregation for the past winter & spring would continue to be manifested. Still there has been nothing to discourage me. The degree of interest which has continued to prevail has been highly gratifying. The general weekly prayer meeting has not been as well attended on the part of the brethren for the last few weeks as I could have wished. I have always found it difficult to maintain the usual attendance & interest in the church prayer meeting in a farming community during the summer when the evenings are very short & business is very pressing. The female prayer meeting has been usually well attended & interesting. The Sabbath School is tolerably well attended & is doing, I trust, not a little good. The Bible Classes are well sustained—I conduct myself the male Bible Class which has a varying attendance of from 20 to 35. We are now studying in course the Westminster Shorter Catechism in which there has been such a degree of interest that although we commenced it a number of Sabbaths ago we have succeeded in getting through the discussion of only the first two questions.

Public worship during the most of the quarter has been very well attended. Indeed during the

seven quarters that I have labored here the attendance has been highly gratifying to me; and what has been a source of still greater pleasure to me is the marked interest manifested in the preached word of God. And I desire to be duly grateful to our God for kindly enabling me to urge upon my people the words of life every Sabbath of the quarter except one when I was absent & my place was supplied by a brother in the ministry.

There have been added to the church during the past quarter fourteen individuals—six by profession of their faith in Christ & eight by letter from other churches—of the six added by profession three were heads of families. We have been called also during the quarter to discharge the unpleasant yet important duty of excluding two individuals from the church.

The quarter has been characterised by an unusual degree of health in the community & we are indulging the hope that we shall not be visited so fearfully with disease as we were during the last year. We know not, however, what a day may bring forth. Not our will but that of the Lord be done.

Forward, if you please, my quarterly appropriation at your earliest convenience.

Yours in the bonds of the Gospel

Chas. Kellogg

* * * * *

Almont, Nov. 1st, 1850
Lapeer Co. Michigan

To the Executive Committee)
of the American Home)
Missionary Society)

Dear Brethren

My quarterly report due some weeks since has been delayed in order that the annual collection for Home Missions might be reported according to the requirement of my commission—Circumstances had led to the postponement of that collection until

the last Sabbath. The period covered by this report had been one unmarked by any striking features—As a church, congregation & community we seem to have been somewhat stationary.

Yet I cannot but feel that, wherever the Gospel is preached with any degree of fidelity & is received (as, it appears to me, it has been here) with a good degree of interest, there must be an advancing undercurrent, though the surface be apparently without any motion.

The hope of the world's regeneration is based more and more (as far as instrumentalities are concerned) on the steady & constantly operative influence of the Sabbath, the sanctuary, the stated ministrations of the word, the Church with her ordinances & the religious education of the young.

The religion of our Baptist brethren here (with whom as well as with our Methodist brethren—the only denominations here—we are on terms of the most pleasant Christian intercourse) is somewhat of the periodic type. A revivalist—so called—has of late been laboring with them seeking to get up a revival. I trust that I am always deeply interested in the indications in the presence of God's spirit, & of a revival of His work in the hearts of His people; but with efforts only calculated to produce a temporary excitement I can have no sympathy. In the present instance I have—as I always propose to do in such cases—pursued the even tenor of my way in such a manner as to avoid, if possible, the attitude & appearance of hostility, & all cause of offence. The effort has ceased without any apparent results of any nature.

Two years ago an effort of the same nature yet much more commendable in its spirit & management, was made with mixed results—The evil was distinctly traceable to the effort itself—the good as distinctly to the ordinary & previously used means of grace. I regret the more the effort just made as its influence is I think to hinder the revival of God's work—and that too at a time when we all need it. The most marked indication of that

need exists in the want of a Spirit of prayer. In both the other churches, I am told, the weekly prayer meeting is not sustained for the time being, while in our own the general & female prayer-meetings have not been attended with that interest which I long to see. I am, however, not without hope that a better time is just at hand. There are some things calculated to encourage me in respect to the Sabbath School—There are signs of an increased interest in it on the part of teachers & scholars & the church. I have charge of the school myself.

The present is the closing report of the year embraced in my commission—the ninth year of my connexion with the society & possibly my last. The brethren are making a strong effort to succeed & I hope will be able to sustain me without asking aid. The question is not yet fully settled. Accept from the church & myself many thanks for your timely & kind assistance in the work of the Lord.

Of the balance due me \$18.75, you will be kind enough to retain \$10.70 & the balance, \$8.05 pay to American Board of C.T.M.—as the contribution of the 1st Cong'l Chh of Almont to your Society & the Am. Board.

Affectionately yours in
the work of the Lord

Chas. Kellogg

JOHN S. KIDDER

John S. Kidder was sent into Michigan by the American Home Missionary Society in 1843, reaching Kalamazoo in the fall of that year. Shortly after his arrival, he began holding religious services in the village of Schoolcraft, located in Kalamazoo County.

In April of the following year, Kidder organized a Congregational Church there. Kidder remained with this church for about two years, leaving sometime in 1846, the date of the last letter from him which we reproduce here. A few years after his departure from Schoolcraft the congregation of the church he had built up changed the form of the organization to presbyterian, and it became known as the Schoolcraft Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. Mr. Kidder also served the Eaton Rapids Congregational Church, and some years later the Rochester Congregational Church for a period, the term of this latter pastorate there extending from July 1869 until April 1871.

All three of the reports of Mr. Kidder shown here are rather lengthy, and contain much interesting data of the village of Schoolcraft in its early days. The letters reveal the many trials and discouragements which frequently confronted these early missionaries, and the gradual acceptance of the people of the claims of the church.

All three of the letters shown here are handstamped with the red circular marking of the Schoolcraft post office.

Schoolcraft Kalamazoo Co. Mich.
Feb. 26 1845

To Rev. Mr. Badger Sec. of A.H.M. Society

Dear Sir

I rec'd a commission from the Soc. whose Sec. you are, for another year some days since; & have

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Rev. Milton Badger
 Sec. A. H. M. Society
 Entered
 \$40
 New York City

delayed to forward a report on account of sickness in my family, & for other reasons. Was very sorry to occasion you trouble by neglecting to make my request, for a new commission, in due form. It slipped my mind for the time that there were directions laid down in my former commission; though it occurred to me soon after. No one can fail to see the propriety of these directions. Trust not to give occasion for such trouble in future.

The past quarter has been one partly pleasant & partly adverse—of light & shade—doubtless to diversify my experience & afford suitable discipline. Near the first of Jan. our people had a donation visit at the house of their minister. About fifty persons convened—had a pleasant time & they left of their carnal things to the value of about fifty dollars. This was the first thing of the kind in Schoolcraft. Before the month closed, the house which we occupied, in connexion with another family, was consumed by the devouring element—fire. The loss of property we sustained was valued at about 300 dollars. In which value was included about three fourths of my Library. So that a very meagre number of books remain.

In the state of religious things there is nothing very marked. Alternate hope & fear have agitated my mind. Have hoped for an outpouring of the Spirit of grace upon this church & people. But

the object of my hope is still future. There has been an increase of interest in the church. Our prayer meetings have been more fully attended & have afforded clearer evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence. We had a day of fasting & prayer, near the beginning of the present year; & it seemed to give an impulse to the interest, felt in the church.

The Sabbath congregation has been larger the last three months than at any time previous.

The people in this place have been notorious for their disregard of the Sabbath & religious meetings. The Baptist minister, who has preached here some years, has sometimes preached to only five or six persons on the Sab. & in some instances has gone to meeting & found no person there, except his own family; though the number of inhabitants in the village is estimated at 400 or 500, besides those scattered over the prairie. While the meeting was so small, you might see a multitude collected at a little distance for witnessing a horse race, & it is more over said that if a Christian lived in the place, the people wished to get rid of him.

Public sentiment is undergoing a change, & the people themselves are changing. Religion & religious meetings are not looked down upon now with so much contempt. There has been a great Temperance reform during the year past. Over six hundred names have been added to the total abstinence pledge. In pleasant weather the hall in which we worship is pretty well filled. Our Sab. School is larger this winter than it was last summer. And the bible Class continues to excite as much interest as at any previous time—embracing Lawyers physicians merchants mechanics etc. It is hoped that much good will result from this mode of diffusing biblical truth.

We have adopted the plan of taking monthly collections in the Sab. School for the increase of the library. It is interesting to reside in such a place as this & observe the changes going on in Society, in its forming state; & more interesting still to exert an influence in moulding it into a moral & religious community. Errorists are not

asleep; but pulling everything & turning every stone for advancing their mischievous designs & opposing the cause of truth & righteousness. Universalists & infidels are numerous. The works of Paine, of Volney & other French infidels are familiar to the people.

At Texas a place six miles distant, where I preach on the evening of every alternate Sab., a Universalist minister has been teaching the people that men are not free agents, that they cannot do otherwise than they do, & as sinners cannot help sinning they are not blameworthy. If there is any guilt incurred, God is responsible. Every man following the irresistible, impulsive force of God, "fills the circle marked by Heaven."

Infidels unite their influence in the propagation of these sentiments; & many are eager to swallow them down, licentious as they are in their tendency & subversive of all governments human & divine. Still I trust by the faithful preaching of the truth & a Christian influence on the part of those who love the cause of God (Trust there are a few of them in that place) that those dogmas will be arrested.

Should prefer to receive the value of my commission in quarterly installments & should like the first appropriation as soon as convenient.

Will you have the goodness to forward ten dollars to Rev. W.F. Wheeler one of your missionaries stationed at Grand Haven Mich. & deduct the same from my instalment, as I am indebted to him that amount. And I remain

Respectfully your bro. in Christ

John S. Kidder

Schoolcraft Kal. Co.

Aug. 12th 1845 Mich

To Secretaries of A.H.M. Society

I sit down to report another quarterly experience in this part of the Lord's vineyard. My health has been good and I have been permitted by a Kind Providence to prosecute my labors uninterruptedly. Think our cause is gradually acquiring strength. There are no marked & signal advances, no sudden & sweeping changes. But the leaven is diffusing itself.

Still there is so much to be done that our progress appears small; & sometimes I fear that a too flattering description of our condition & prospects has been given. I know that there is a great deal of opposition to struggle against. I know that Infidelity Universalism and other species of error have rolled their dark waves over the place in times past with almost unresisted force; and I know that a vast amount of force is necessary to arrest this tide & cause it to set the other way. Still that the power of the truth of God & the influences of the Holy Spirit are destined to effect this change & cause the waters of peace & salvation to flow over this fertile delightful prairie, I have not a doubt. Besides the direct influence of the preached Gospel upon the heart & conscience our cause is becoming relieved of the many prejudices that have existed against it, & also is acquiring a reputation of stability & permanence. And I think that an impression is going out that there is a growing consistency in the lives of professing Christians & an increasing attachment to the cause of Christ.

God is encouraging his Zion here by inducing pious people from the East, to make this place their home. Several families have come among us this summer. And we feel thankful to God for thus remembering us. At my preaching stations out of town—Texas & Vicksburgh, the Lord seems to be preparing the way for some overturn.

(X)

Rev. Milton Badger D.D.



Sec. A. F. M. Society

New York City

Doubt not you have ascertained that a mistake has been made in forwarding to me two drafts of one hundred dollars which was voted me by your Soc. I rec'd a draft dated June 11th of \$116.38 that is one hundred dollars which was the sum voted me towards compensating for my loss by fire —and the balance of a quarterly instalment above the sum laid out by you for books to be sent to me.

But I had rec'd. the draft of one hundred dolls. previously which I had made use of. So of the draft dated June 11th I have made no use. I took it for granted that Dr. Badger who sent the latter draft was ignorant of the sending of the former one.

There are three ways that I can do, in relation to the draft. I can, Firstly, cross out the \$100 & sell the remainder, which business men assure me would not be improper. Secondly, I can destroy the whole draft & you can make it right in the next one you send me; or thirdly, I can if you see proper use the whole draft which will just cover the two remaining instalments of the current year, & receive no more from your treasury during the time covered by my commission. I wait your direction in the affair. Should it be convenient to send a draft of a quarter's instalment provided you think it not best that I use the one I have,

on receiving this, it would oblige me as I wish to go a journey early in Sept. & should be glad of the remittance previous to going. Please inform me in relation to the matter.—Have not rec'd. the books yet, but they are daily expected; will probably soon reach me.

The cause of religion must be regarded as prosperous in this part of the State, though there are but few revivals. The Churches are enlarging by the increase of population, & by additions of some joining by profession. Odium, resting on the churches, is wearing away; and infidelity which has been very bold, is retiring into the dark corners. Mr. Gaston of Three Rivers has gone East this summer to recover his health. He seems inclined to pulmonary affection. I hear that his health is improving & that he is intending to return near the first of Sept. We greatly need religious reading. There is a great destitution of religious books. The distribution of the Tract Soc. volumes in this vicinity would be the means of great good.

I remain in Christian affection

Yours

J. S. Kidder

(Note, apparently penned by the A.H.M.S., as follows:)

"Ans. August 25th—

Mr. K. authorised to sell the draft in
his possession.

M.B."

* * * * *

Schoolcraft Kalamazoo Co. Mich.

Jan. 20th 1846

Rev. Dr. Badger Sec. A.H.M. Society

Dear Sir

I rec'd. from you, a few days since, written by Mr. Lawrence, bearing date of Sept. 29th. Mr. L. says there is a discrepancy between the application of my people and my last letter—remarking that the former is dated 29th Sept. & the latter

1st of Nov. If that be the case it was a mistake in the applicants. But I can conceive it hardly possible. Did not Mr. L. get his impression of the discrepancy, from looking at the date in the Annual Report of the A.H.M.S. where the date is 29th Sept. The facts are these. On my first coming West with a commission from the A.H.M.S. I reached Kalamazoo 29th of Sept. But it was some 3 weeks or more, before the arrangements were consummated, in respect to the location of myself & brethren in the ministry who came westward near the time I did. I did not know whether it was the custom to commence the salary at the time of the Missionary's arrival on the field or at the beginning of his stated labors. So in my quarterly report I dated at the time I commenced labors in this place. But when the Annual Report of A.H.M.S. reached me I observed the date of my com. was the time of my arrival in this part of the country—29th of Sept. But I never altered it until now after the reception of the present year's com.

Our people are making an effort towards building a meeting house. The subscription is not yet finished. I preached a sermon on the subject of Home Missions, before my last year closed & took up a subscription, but the collection is not yet closed. Sorry it is not. Hope our people will learn little more promptness in these matters. They are however doing much better in benevolent action this year than last.

It is to me a continual source of grief to see the prevalence of iniquity and error in this place —to see so many swallowed up in the yawning vortex of infidelity, and to see so many, especially of young people, drinking of the Circean cup of Universalism, whose potion sends torpor through the whole system, palsies the moral sensibilities, and closes the eye to all sight of danger until its victims fall into the arms of the second death. This class of persons hold meetings, & have what they call preaching, every alternate Sabbath. And it is not difficult to see the effect of this influence upon them. For they not only imbibe erroneous principles; but as a consequence, form

vicious habits. Hence, Sabbath breaking, profanity, horse-racing, gambling & drunkenness are rife among us. Whiskey is sold in abundance, contrary to law, boldly, in open day. And the unwary are enticed by the tempting glass to yield themselves victims to the destroyer. Such being the influence, I am persuaded the advancement of truth is to be little by little, unless God stretch out his mighty arm & work for us; which we hope he will do. How much we need the prayers & sympathies of the friends of the Redeemer abroad, that God would fulfil his promise to us—that "When the enemy come in as a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." How does your missionary need grace & wisdom from above, that he may be an instrument in the hands of God in rolling back the tide of sin. But what would become of this place were it not for the religious influence put forth by the little band of God's servants that are exerting themselves to diffuse the leaven of righteousness through this heterogeneous mass. If you can forward a draft of one quarter's appropriation you will oblige

Your bro. in the gospel

J. S. Kidder

Note "Extend \$43,75"

CLARK LOCKWOOD

Searching for biographical data for the Rev. Charles Lockwood is illustrative of some of the problems confronting anyone seeking facts about our early settlers.

Although these two letters from this reverend gentleman are conclusive proof that Lockwood served under the American Home Missionary Society in the Dexter area, nothing in the early history of Dexter and Webster Townships in Washtenaw County or in the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections reveals that fact. Probably other sources might reveal many interesting facts about the Rev. Mr. Lockwood and his work in Michigan, but they are not presently available. Possibly the serious illness to which he refers again seized him and rendered it impossible for him to continue.

The reference to the coming of the railroad to the community is most interesting, and is only one of many objections which were raised throughout the state not only by religious but by lay groups. Little did they realize that the passing of another century would see the activities of the railroad greatly reduced, and much of its work taken over by motor driven vehicles.

Both of these letters were postmarked at Dexter with the red circular handstamp of that post office. The strikes are poor and indistinct so are not illustrated here.

Dexter, Michigan, Sept. 7, 1847.

Dr. Sir

My first report to your society will contain little of an interesting character otherwise than during the last quarter our congregation has gradually increased until within a short time since the prevailing sickness of the families has kept some at home. We have received two by profession & four by letter at our last communion in June. Have consecrated a number of dear little ones to God in

the holy ordinance of Baptism. The Sabbath School has been revived early on my arrival to this field with encouraging prospects. Our weekly prayer meetings have been well attended & from the cries of God's dear people & their hearty & ready exhortations to one another Your Missionary has felt greatly encouraged to hope that a better day is at hand. I have been much encouraged to hope & to look for a blessing from God upon this people from the union & harmony visible among the brethren & the deep solicitude felt & expressed for the Salvation of sinners.

The Monthly Concert is observed every month & sympathy felt for dying millions of a lost world. A most hearty expression of gratitude is presented by Myself & my dear people for the commission sent by the almoners of the church to me to preach the Gospel to this people. The church is feeble & I fully believe are to a man willing to do all they can for the support of the gospel here. All feel so far as I am able to ascertain that your society is invaluable in its effects at the west & cannot but love & esteem it under God as the most conspicuous means for the salvation of the great valley. The church in Dexter now feel greatly encouraged & promise cooperation in the great work of saving souls.

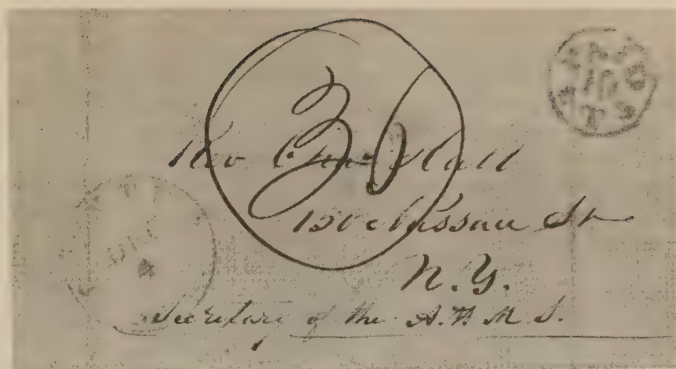
My first quarter from my commission is gone & I greatly need a quarter payment if consistent to send it soon. The amount due I perceive is Thirty One Dollars \$31.25 & a quarter.

Yours affectionately sc
Mr. Chas. Hall
Clark Lockwood

* * * * *

Dexter. Dec. 3, 1847.
Dear Sir—

During the past quarter my plans & purposes by the Providence of God have been not a little frustrated by a severe course of sickness. About the middle of Oct. I was suddenly seized with congestion of the brain which brought me near the grave. For a number of days my life was despaired



of, but God has graciously recovered me so far as to be able in some measure to fill my place on the Sabbath in the Sanctuary & to visit my people a little. My people were extremely kind in ministering to my wants & the wants of my family. Our pulpit has been vacant for several Sabbaths & the effects are visible in the other departments of doing good—Still the brethren maintained the prayer meetings. On the Sabbath & during the week & prayed earnestly for me, that my life might be spared & that I might be restored again to health. To their prayers I attribute my recovery much as few recover from the disease with which I was afflicted. Our Sabbath School felt the effects of a vacant pulpit, it being held between meetings on the Sabbath—Still it was maintained & we hope soon to see it revive again. The church & Society have extended a unanimous call to me become their Pastor. With some hesitancy on account of the sickness of the place I have accepted it. We shall soon have the installation. The Catholics are multiplying rapidly in our little village. Their influence together with our great Sabbath breaking railroad pours a tide of immoral upon us neutralizing nearly all efforts at good.

There may be some professedly good men belonging to the company in Boston who have purchased this Central Railroad. I wish they could see what a tide of wickedness is created by the rolling of cars through our otherwise peaceful villages on the

Sabbath, attracting the gaze of the youth, & drawing vast companies of the idle to their depots, & even disturbing the congregations of worshippers in our sanctuaries, by their bells & whistles & thunder roarings, as they pass at all times of the day. We believe little good will all the money do them that is thus acquired at the expense of God's holy law, & the Salvation of the Souls of thousands.

Dr. Sir—Would it be consistant to send me a copy of the Home Missionary Herald. I greatly need it & if you cannot without recompense—please—take it out of my next remittance now due which is compense

\$31.25. Owing to sickness in my family—I greatly need the above as soon as may be.

I am Dr. Sir

Your humble servant & C

C. Lockwood

The Rev. Chas. Hall

HAZAIL LUCAS

An interesting letter is here reproduced which tells of some of the problems and worldly concerns of the early missionary. It comes from the Rev. Hazail Lucas, missionary to the churches in Oshtemo and Texas Townships, in Kalamazoo County.

The available records tell us very little of this reverend gentleman. In fact, the histories of both Oshtemo and Texas Townships have been examined and no reference is made either to the Rev. Mr. Lucas or to any church which he might have served.

There can be no question but that he did serve in the area, and his specific references to membership and the raising of funds for the churches is strong proof that at least a start was made. The "few Methodists" to whom he refers and who he suggested might be "secured" and built into "one society" were apparently the stronger of the two groups, as a history of the area published in 1880 mentions only a Methodist church in that locality.

Around 1849 and 1850 a minister by the name of Ezekiel Lucas served the Congregational Church in Royal Oak. The names of these early ministers were often misspelled and it is quite possible that the Rev. Hazail Lucas and Ezekiel Lucas were one and the same person.

The "Rev'd Mr Hoyt" mentioned by Lucas was the Presbyterian minister at Kalamazoo at the time, the Rev. O. P. Hoyt.

The letter was mailed from the Kalamazoo post office and is post marked with the blue circular townmark of that office.

Kalamazoo Dec. 10, 1846

Rev. Milton Badger

My dear Sir

Since my communication to you 7 members have been added to our communion in Oshtemo (or Genissee prairi). We consider it a valuable accession to this little church. There are five more that I have found in calling from house to house, who will come furward soon. Some of them have letters of membership from churches where they resided before they came to this place, others have made no profession. I have considered it very important (to) look up all such persons, and get them to take a stand., and identify themselves, with God's people. This has appeared to me to be a very important step in building up society here, and I think God has blessed these efforts. It has brought me in contact with all classes and sentiments. The accession made to the church seems to have made a good impression on the community.

There are in this place now a few Methodists. They only have one sermon in two weeks. Now I think it desirable to bestow as much labour here as possible, and if we succeed in building a Meeting House next summer as is contemplated we may without doubt secure the whole ground, and have but one society—and if so it will be a good society and in a few years be able to go on without aid.

Rev'd Mr. Hoyit of Kalamazoo is of the same opinion. He says things never looked so promising here as they do now.

I shall get my family here as soon as circumstances will admit. With my present feelings, I could not go back to the East, though I have many strong attachments, there, I want to see the cause of Christ prosper and his kingdom built up here—and the kingdom of Satan demolished.

Mr. John Church's family of Brooklin, New York, has attended my meetings and united with the church since I came here. He has now returned, with his family to Brooklin. He can give you any information you may wish respecting the field and the course which I have pursued. He told me he would call on

you and make a statement of facts as they exist here. You can confide in his statements, as he is well known in your vicinity.

I have written a letter to send by him—but he started in an unexpected moment to me—and I failed of the (of the) opportunity.

I sent on my quarterly report about four weeks since, and as I have heard nothing from you I have been led to think you may not have rec'd it. I stated to you that the people here are about making up a subscription—but had not finished—and that they could make no payment this fall, and hence I must ask the Miss. Society to pay the first quarter—and let the 75 dollars lie (?), as my family would come early in summer—and as they would be in pressing want of the money this winter, you understand what is meant by the 75 dollars, the sum advanced to pay my expenses here, on condition that my family come. Since I made my report I have rec'd ten dollars—and as I have heard nothing from you I will make out my demand for the quarter again and give credit for the ten dollars. —and if you have sent the draft, it can be deducted from the next.

(Then follows the Demand above referred to.)

Kalamazoo, Dec. 10, 1846.

Trustees of the American Home Missionary Society, debtor to Hazail Lucas for three months preaching in Oshtemo and Texas, Michigan, from August 18th to November 18th—at 400 dollars per year—one hundred dollars—

Rec'd payment by order on the Treasurer

(s) Hazail Lucas

You will deduct ten dollars from the above named sum, making the order 90 dollars..

WILLIAM NARCISSUS LYSTER

One of the few Episcopalian rectors from whom we have letters was the Rev. William Narcissus Lyster. In fact, it is merely a brief note respecting the payment of a bill.

Irish-born and educated, a graduate of Dublin's Trinity College, Lyster came to this country after a pastorate in his native land, possibly as early as 1829, although some say he did not arrive until 1832. In 1833, in any event, we find Lyster in Tecumseh, when he organized St. Peters Episcopal Church in that village. His pastoral work carried him far afield, however, although he spent a large part of his active career in the Tecumseh area.

The Rev. Mr. Lyster held services in Cambridge and Brooklyn for twenty-five years, but he still had time to help out in other parishes. He preached several times in Ann Arbor, officiated at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Marshall once each month for eighteen months, when that church was without a rector, and served as rector of Christ Church in Detroit during 1846. He was the first Episcopalian rector in Clinton.

"The gentle, meek Rev. Wm. Lyster," as one of his fellow ministers described him, retired to Breedsville, Van Buren County, in 1870, where he died seven years later. He was buried in Elmwood Cemetery, Detroit.

This brief note was mailed at the Clinton post office in 1840. It bears a beautiful red strike of the circular townmark of that office, with a "PAID" and manuscript rate mark of "25," also in red.

Dear Mr. Carder

You would particularly oblige me by letting Mr. Swords & Stanford have the amount of their bill, on

the arrival of my report up to the first of October 1840. Your doing this will save much inconvenience and delay.

Your sincere friend & brother

N. W. Lyster

August 28th. 1840

ROBERT McEWEN

Later in this work there will be reproduced several letters from the Rev. Isaac Ruggles of Pontiac, one of the earliest missionaries to come to Michigan. Another missionary, who was associated to some degree with the Rev. Mr. Ruggles in Pontiac, was the Rev. Robert McEwen, a Congregational minister.

From McEwen's first letter it would appear that he began his work in Pontiac in the summer of 1833. Before a full year had passed the First Congregational Society of Pontiac had been organized and a "meeting house" dedicated. To be sure, the Rev. Mr. Ruggles had been working in that area for several years before McEwen arrived and some credit for the new church should surely go to him. But the earnestness of Mr. McEwen and his strenuous labors surely had much to do with the early organization of this church. Mrs. Ruggles, who had become a member of the Presbyterian Society of Pontiac when her husband had organized it several years earlier, transferred her membership to the new church.

The devotion to duty and the constant concern of these early missionaries for the members of their "flock" are reflected in these letters from the Rev. Mr. McEwen. Fortunate indeed was that community which, in the early days of settlement, could have working in its midst a man with the zeal and vision and unselfishness such as is evidenced by these letters.

The McEwen letters were mailed at the Pontiac post office, and each one is postmarked with the rare territorial handstamp of that office, struck in red.

Pontiac Jan. 14, 1834

Dear Sir.

My second quarter expired on the 7th inst. & I hasten to give the progress of things for the last three months.

18 July 1898

New Orleans, La. P.M.
Pontiac, La.

Rev. Abraham T. Tiers

Co. Sec. A. H. M. S.

City of New York

984

My labours in preaching & visiting the people in Pontiac & its vicinity, have been uninterrupted, as during the first quarter. We have had our separate place for meeting & our attendance has been overflowing—often recently many were compelled to stand without the doors, though our room is large & well seated. The Sabbath School has been continued with more regularity and better attendance than ever before. The Bible class also. My personal labours, on one Sabbath, have been preaching twice, superintendence of S.S., & of the Bible Class; on the alternate Sabbath preaching three times, with the other duties mentioned. But I find that not only on the Sabbath, but on every day of the seven I must be a working man. My whole time is occupied by business ready to my hands; just the thing, which I always thought was the happiness of the missionary.

As to the results, though I have not that to tell you which I have longed to see, still I can tell of some blessings which the Lord has sent. The attendance has always been good, & the audience marked in their attention to the word. I have ever felt, that to feed the flock of Chrt. & direct them in the business of their Master was a sufficient object to allure me from the privileges of the East. This has been done; & I can say, "it is more blessed to give, than to receive." But the blessings of God has been beyond all this: He has been so gracious as to draw nigh to us. Within six or eight weeks, the people of God have been awaked to

a more thorough conviction of duty, & have put forth unusual efforts. The interest increased so much, that during one week we held prayer meetings every evening but one. On the Sabbath the meetings were solemn & melting—they are so now. Two young men have hopefully come out on the side of the Lord, & a number who had been reluctant have united themselves with the church. These things on the one hand; on the other, the Kingdom of Satan, who has held & now holds

(apparently one whole page is here missing)

it was everywhere, & no where. Our object is to bear down on one village. We secured quite a number of names, & the solicitors have done well since.

Amidst all my labours, the severe sickness of my wife has been a great trial. She has been brought to a very feeble state, & many of the means of aid in such a case have not been found here of course—; we have been necessarily without assistance much of the time, & with my hands full of the spiritual concerns of this people, I have had a house full of cares on my shoulders. But the Lord has done what seemeth good in His sight. He has done me good. I mention this more particularly in reference to my expenses. But the people have been so prompt, that I shall call for not half of my allowance from you, this quarter.

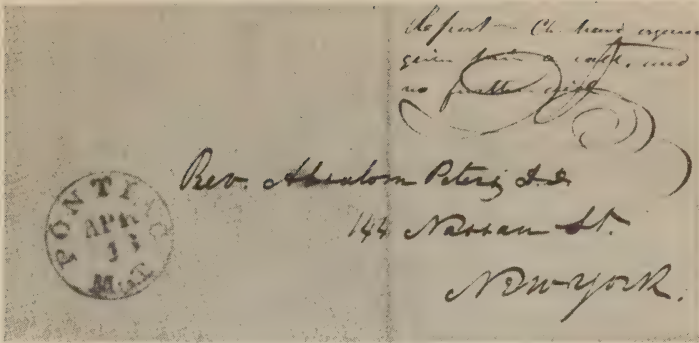
I have many things to write, which I must defer to a future time. Recommend the interests of churches in this region, & of perishing men, & the destiny of our country, & of a world that lies in wickedness, as wrapt up in that of this mighty West, to the prayers & the liberality of that land of gospel privilege where you are.

Yours in the Lord

Rev. Absalom Peters.

Robert McEwen

* * * * *



Pontiac, April 14th, 1834

Dear Brother:

I make this report to you though I have noticed your request on the cover of the "Home Missionary." I do it for the reason you will find in the course of my statements.

I have continued the same labors of which I have spoken in former reports. Many discouraging circumstances occur in a place like this; but I endeavor to remember what our Master said, "Blessed are they that have not seen, & yet have believed."

As to results, there is much to cheer. We have not received the great blessing that we now look for with more faith, I trust, than cheer; but God has done and is doing every thing in his providence, & much in the bestowal of his gracious influence. The attendance on the means of grace is enough to make any one who has known this place of old, ask, Who are there? Well attended prayer meetings—not only professors, but impenitent men taking their seats, are wonders also to be seen here. And to see our little band of Christians after all their coldness & division, flowing together, with full hearts, & speaking often one to another, is truly in Pontiac, to see the haven of promise after the storm and flood. Every Sabbath, for 3 or 4 weeks

past, it has seemed as if the next blow would shiver the rock. God is plainly trying his people. They have been so long faithless & unbelieving, that they must sow the longer in tears, if they would reap in joy. But I do believe, that it is the feeling of not a few, "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, & come down!"

Other circumstances encourage us to hope that the institutions of the Gospel are to be permanently established, and appropriated among this people. Week before last a religious society was organized in connection with the church to which I minister, under the name of "First Congregational Society of Pontiac." The meeting house is to be dedicated in May. They have also given me a call to become their pastor, & I am to be installed the first of June.

This leads me to speak of my connection with the A.H.M.S. With present prospects, we shall not need to draw on your funds any longer; certainly not for this year, with the grateful acknowledgment on the part of this people & myself, of your kind assistance in the past. And we trust, that your society & its christian patrons, have another instance to record of your instrumentality, in founding institutions, whose blessings will brighten with "the days of heaven." What a noble instrumentality it is, whose results will be ever unfolding & thrilling in heavenly strains!

I send with this the required schedule, & commending the interests of this dear people to the prayers of yourself & those who pray with you.

I remain yours, in the Gospel.

R. McEwen

Rev. A. Peters

There then follows a chart prepared by McEwen showing the number of members as of July 1, 1833, which totaled 25, "5 male, 20 female." Between then and the following April 14 members had been added by letter and 4 by confession. The Sunday School had 60 members, with an average attendance of 40. There were 100 volumes in the library. The Bible Class had 30 members and a newly formed temperance society had 40 members.

ALEXANDER M. McJUNKIN

We reproduce only one letter from the Rev. Alexander M. McJunkin, a missionary who served the churches of Plymouth and Nankin in territorial days. He was installed as the pastor of the Plymouth church in September of 1835, but from his letter it would appear that he had served elsewhere in the territory, as he refers in his opening paragraph to a report that he had made five months previously, which would have been at least in June or July.

Together with other Presbyterian and Congregational ministers in Michigan Territory he had been interested and active in the establishment of Marshall College, at Marshall, Michigan, of which institution the Rev. John Cleaveland was the first president. Like other well-intentioned organizations, this college failed when a serious financial depression, the Panic of 1837, swept the country, the very year Michigan attained statehood.

This particular letter was mailed at Plymouth and bears the rare manuscript territorial marking from that office.

Plymouth Wayne Co. Mich. Nov. 20. 1835

Dear Sir

Within the five months since my last report, I have attempted to preach about seventy seven or eight times, besides an occasional address or sermon elsewhere, than in Plymouth and Nankin. In most particulars it has been my aim to comply with the "General Instructions" of the Com. On the 3rd of Sept. I was ordained & installed by the Presb. of Detroit Pastor of the ch. in Plymouth. There was much tenderness of feeling manifested by the church on that occasion, & its faith and courage seem to be increasing.

A few converts have been added to each of these churches. (P & N.) A little good has been

done—some of the strong holds of sin have been, at least, weakened--& an advance, somewhat visible, has been made in establishing the Kingdom of our blessed Master.

We have now some praying men in Plymouth village. When I came to it last Feb. there was but one man, (a Methodist) who was even a professor of religion. For three months after my arrival there was a ball regularly once a week & of the vilest kind. The "enemy of all righteousness" had possession--the sabbath was and in a measure is yet known only by shooting and the noise of mirth & revelry & ruffian fights and the foul oath & the passing of family wagons on Sabbath visits--all, all meeting my ear as I stand in the desk trying to reason of Righteousness & Temperance and Judgment to come, & warning them that for these things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. For a while the church looked on & wept and seemed to fear both the world & the Devil —At length in the fearless spirit of the Gospel she made an "aggressive movement"—seized & planted & has maintained hitherto, the standard of the Cross in the very midst of that spot which she has seen Satan so long strengthening for himself. A conflict began for Satan did not flee—that strife continues—the church knows it, & knows where her strength lieth—and you can see her at the throne, pressing her heaven moving arguments into the bosom of Him who loves to hear his people pray & longs to gratify the soul wishes which his Spirit has awakened. And sorely does Satan grudge the inch after inch which has been wrested from him.

Some souls have been won to Christ—two of whom are about commencing their studies for the Christian ministry. If we ever find "lion like men" we may expect them among converts in such a place as this. To stand it against the array of earth & hell in a rising village of 300 inhabitants where every man & woman knows you, & every one sneers, requires from the outset the zeal of martyrs & the heroism of Paul. A few more in this village of three hundred for whom my heart yearns, seem ready to yield to the force of truth,—take

up their cross, & bear all that an affronted world can do unto them. This fact and this only prevents despondency, as, without this unequivocal manifestation of the divine presence the conclusion would have been inevitable, from the enormous sin practised here, that the Lord had forsaken us, and the workmen laboured in vain. As "much people" were ordained to eternal life in Corinth, loose as her morals were, it is hoped there are "a few names" in Plymouth—which is said, not by me, but by others, to be the worst place in the Territory.

We contemplate holding a protracted struggle in about four weeks. Br. Cleaveland of Detroit to assist us—

We have taken up a collection for your Soc. (5\$ only— a day of small things) and forwarded it to Br Hastings* of Detroit, Treas. Mich. H.M.S.

Our Sabbath School flourishes. One man a Dr has withdrawn his children lest the things taught might trouble their consciences—His parents taught him things which distressed him much till he was eighteen. This man is a Senator in our young legislature. He is at the head of all malign influence here—his (a word missing) is a lawyer living here, but the latter does not oppose stoutly.

We have received fifty additional signatures to the temp pledge since 1st Sept. On the 19th of November I organized a society called the 2nd Presbyterian Church in Nankin, five to six miles south of the 1st Nankin Ch; and 20 miles from Detroit, on the great thorough fare across the territory to Chicago, & admitted 11 members. Five of these by letter—Others will soon join, who have not yet received their letters of dismission from their respective churches at the east.

A pledge of entire abstenance "from all that intoxicates" as an ordinary drink is required of every member.

Very Respectfully

*Eurotas P. Hastings

A. M. McJunkin

ROBERT McMATH

Robert McMath was the son of Samuel McMath, one of the early settlers of the Willow Run area, in Washtenaw County. Under the encouragement of the Rev. Ira Mason Wead, early missionary and long-time minister at Ypsilanti, young McMath, at the age of seventeen, decided to study for the ministry. The record is not clear as to just when or where he completed his training.

McMath did serve in Three Rivers and around 1850 went to Otsego, in Allegan County. We reproduce a letter concerning this reverend gentleman and the desire of the Congregational Church of Otsego and the Presbyterian Church of Gun Plains to share his services. It does not certainly appear that the request of the officers of these two churches was granted by the home office. A notation on the back of the cover, made at the New York office of the American Home Missionary Society, briefly summarizes the nature of the request but is silent as to the disposition recommended.

Later in this work we reproduce a very interesting letter from these same churches, written by the Rev. Solomon Stevens. From this letter it would appear that the Rev. Mr. Stevens began serving these two congregations in the fall of 1851. Possibly he was the "son of thunder" which the Rev. O. P. Hoyt of the Kalamazoo church felt would be preferable to mild-mannered Mr. McMath.

The letter from the Elders, Trustees and Deacons of the two churches involved, and the crisp and frank postscript of the Rev. Mr. Hoyt, make interesting and informative reading.

A brother reports that the Rev. Robert McMath died in Webster, New York, around 1874.

The letter respecting McMath was date-lined at Gun Plains but mailed from Kalamazoo.

Gun Plains, Allegan Co., Mich.

May 11, 1850.

Rev. Chas. Hall.

Dear Sir. Permit us to present through you to the Executive Committee of the A.H.M.S. the following application, which we feel constrained by our desire to enjoy the preached Gospel, and by our necessities to make. The church in whose behalf we apply is the First Presbyterian Church of Gun Plains;—the number of members twenty five: the average number of attendants on public worship about seventy five. There is a Baptist and a Methodist Church situated among us,—and a Congregational Church at Otsego, three miles distant from our place of worship,—and which is the only one of the Presbyterian or Congregational order in the vicinity. We propose to raise in all for the Rev. Robert McMath recently from Three Rivers—a member of the Kalamazoo Presbytery,—now residing in Otsego which is his present P.O. address, and whose services we wish to secure, the sum of two hundred dollars for his labors one half the time, the other half to be devoted to the church at Otsego. Of this amount we shall be able to raise among ourselves about one hundred & ten dollars. For the remainder \$90 we feel under the necessity of applying as we are encouraged to do, to the A.H.M.S. If you can grant us this amount for the support of Mr. McMath one half the time for a year beginning the middle, or the third Sabbath of April we shall esteem it a great favor,—and feel laid under great obligation,—and are persuaded that you will thereby subserve the interests of the cause of Christ in this vicinity.

Signed

Cyrenus Thompson)

D. D. McMath) Trustees

D. A. McMartin)

Cyrenus Thompson) Elders.

Otsego, Allegan Co. Mich. May 11th, 1850.

To the Executive Committee of the A.H.M.S.

Dear Brethren.

The Congregational Church of Otsego in whose

name & behalf we write you, are desirous to unite with the church on Gun Plains in sustaining the Rev. Robert McMath, so as to secure his labors among us one half the time. For this proportion of his time for a year we propose to make up for him the sum of two hundred dollars. Of this amount we can safely pledge ourselves to raise only about one hundred & fifty dollars. And we feel constrained by our poverty, and our desire to enjoy the ministrations of the Gospel to ask your Society for fifty dollars—the sum requisite to make the necessary amount. If you can aid us to this amount towards the support of Mr. McMath so that we may enjoy his labors half the time for a year beginning the middle of the third Sabbath of April—we shall esteem it a great favor,—shall hope to increase in strength & ability, and trust we shall not be unmindful of the obligations thereby laid upon us.—We may add that this church numbers about forty five members. The average attendance on public worship about 110 or 115. The Baptist Congregation in the village is about as large as ours;—the Methodist is quite small. No other churches in the vicinity except the one at Gun Plains three Miles distant.

Signed

	(Wm. A. House
Trustees	(
	(D. M. Hall
	(Henry Green
Deacons	(
	(N. Seeley

Secretaries of A. H. M. S.

The within application has been sent to me to be forwarded. It is one of those cases on which I am perfectly clear, when I take one view of the case, specifically in doubt when I take another. As the arrangement however has been made between the parties, I can do no less than recommend the appropriation, as its refusal might work evil. Still from all I can learn of the case I have my fears that no great amount of good will result from it. Br. McMath is an excellent mind & good preacher.

But it wants a "son of thunder" on that hard field, particularly Otsego, where the devil and their last minister have well nigh introduced the style of civilization which prevails in Sodom. On the whole I am fully in favor of the appropriation. It may be casting bread upon the waters. I have not seen the rest of our Comm'ee since the application came; but from former conversations venture to speak in their behalf as well as my own.

O. P. Hoyt

BEN LOUIS MILLS

Although we have only a short letter written by the Rev. Ben Louis Mills himself we are able to show a longer letter respecting him and his work in the Algansee Presbyterian Church in southeastern Branch County.

This latter letter is well composed by the Elders of the church. Both Joseph W. Lawrence, Jr. and his father were strong Christian laymen and were prominent in the settlement of this portion of the county. The Rev. William Page, who adds a postscript in the nature of an endorsement of the request made by the church elders, was an active minister in the presbytery and is mentioned elsewhere in this work.

After serving the church at Algansee, the Rev. Mr. Mills, more often known simply as Louis Mills, filled the pulpit of the Saginaw Congregational (formerly Presbyterian) Church as stated supply from November 1848, until the following July. He was also the regular minister of the Ionia Presbyterian Church in 1854 and 1855.

The letter, although date-lined at Algansee (Algansee), was mailed at the Jonesville post office and bears the circular postmark of that office, struck in blue.

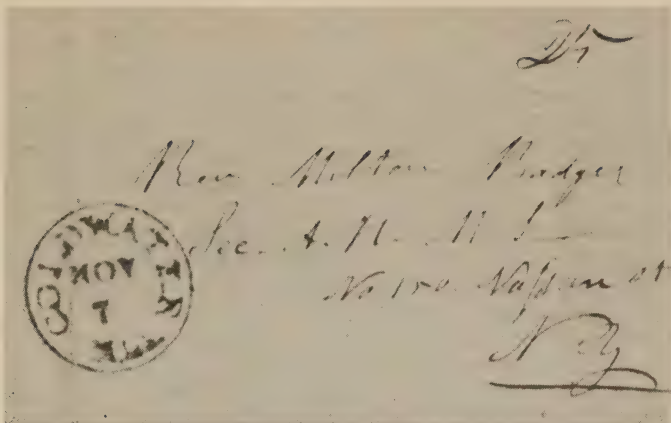
The note written by Mills himself from Cold Water (later contracted to Coldwater) refers to his "ecclesiastic relations." His subsequent service in the Ionia and Saginaw church would suggest that such relations were satisfactorily resolved.

Cold Water Nov 5th 1842

Rev. Milton Badger

Dear Brother

I last evening returned from a meeting of the Marshall presbytery held at Brooklyn Jackson Co.—
& found your letter bearing date Oct 26th 1842 in



which you stated some difficulties which had arisen in your mind respecting my Ecclesiastical relations & desiring some information upon the subject—In compliance with your request I will say, that I am now a member in regular standing of the Presbytery of Marshall having connected myself with it during its session the present week. The following certificate will confirm what I have just stated

Yours truly

Louis Mills.

This may certify that I am an Elder in the Presbyterian Church of Cold Water in which Ben L. Mills is now labouring & was present at the meeting of the Marshall Presbytery above mentioned as a delegate & that the Ben L. Mills was received as a member of that body in good & regular standing.

Cold Water Nov 5th 1842

Luther Stiles

* * * * *

Algansé Dec 12 1842

Rev. & Dear Brother.

We the undersigned Elders of the Presbyterian Church of Algansé would in behalf of said church

make known to you our present weak & destitute condition with respect to the means of supporting the preaching of the Gospel among us, together with one united request that aid may be granted us by the A.H.M. Soc. of which you are an official organ. You sir are not wholly ignorant of our affairs. Having but recently commenced clearing & improving our lands & being subject to all the disadvantages, inconveniences & privations incident to a new country; our church & society being small, together with the present reduced price of all kinds of produce in this region & the extreme scarcity of money, we are utterly unable without foreign aid to sustain among us the ordinances of the gospel. Surrounded as many of us are with numerous & rising families we feel deeply interested in having them surrounded with a correct & healthful moral influence which we find to be impracticable without the use of the appointed means of grace—The demand for Evangelical preaching here is rendered doubly urgent from the fact that Universalism Christianity & almost every other form of infidelity is rapidly springing up in our midst. Ben Louis Mills now a member of the Marshall Presbytery has been labouring with us with acceptance for some two months past one third of the time and so far as we are able to judge his labours have not been in vain & promise future usefulness insomuch that we are extremely desirous of securing them one third of the time the remaining portion of the year. We propose to pay him the sum of one hundred thirty-four dollars & have secured by subscription the sum of sixty-four dollars which leaves a ballance of seventy dollars which we desire should be granted by your society—Our church numbers thirty-three members four having united with us since Rev. Mills came among us on profession of their faith—Our congregation will average from seventy-five to one hundred souls. There is no evangelical congregation that worships nearer than four miles. Should you see fit to grant Bro Mills a commission agreeable to our request you will please to date it Oct 9th 1842 & address Ben Louis Mills Cold Water Branch Co Michigan.

Rev'd Chs Hall

Elders

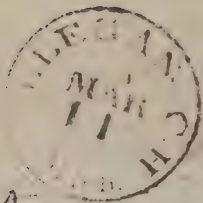
(J. W. Lawrence, junior
(W. H. Lathrope
(Thomas Pratt

Dear Brother—

I have read the above & unite in the request—
although it would have pleased me better had the
request been for fifty dollars instead of seventy
five.

Yours sincerely—

William Page



X

Rev. Messrs. Briggs & Hall
 Secretaries A. H. M. S.
 150 Nassau St.
 New York (Ct.)

1857
 1/1857

25

Rev. Absalom Peters
 Cor. Sec. A. H. M. S.
 No. 150, Nassau St.
 New York.

Rev. Messrs. Briggs & Hall
 150 Nassau St.
 New York.

Farmington Me. D. C.
 February 17, 1881
 25
 Rev. Absalom Peters
 Cor. Sec. of the A. M. S.
 New York
 144 Nassau Street

25
 DEC 6
 Mich.
 Rev. Charles Hall
 A. M. S.
 144 Nassau St.
 New York

16
 AUG 12
 Mich.
 Rev Dr Badger
 Sec. of the A. M. S.
 150 Nassau St
 New York

25
Canton Mass.
17 Apr 18

25

Rev. Absalom Peters

Cor. Sec. A. S. M. S.

145 Nassau Street, New York

Received of Mr

Feb 15

25

100

100

100

100

100



25

Rev. Charles Hall

Secretary of A. S. M. S.

150 Nassau Street

New York

JAMES NALL

One might think that by 1850 the State of Michigan would be sufficiently settled so as to make unnecessary the continuance of sending missionaries into the area. Such, however, was not the case. As late as that year the American Home Missionary Society was continuing its missionary efforts in Michigan.

The Rev. Mr. James Nall was commissioned to labor in the western part of Wayne County in that year, and it would appear from his letters that his first churches were at Dearbornville, now Dearborn, and Flat Rock. He was later invited to preach at Wayne and his last letter shown here indicates that he had accepted the call to that church, which he regarded "quite as important as Flat Rock."

By 1857 Nall was preaching at the Wyandotte Presbyterian Church on alternate Sundays, and beginning very shortly after that date he served a six year pastorate at the Royal Oak Congregational Church.

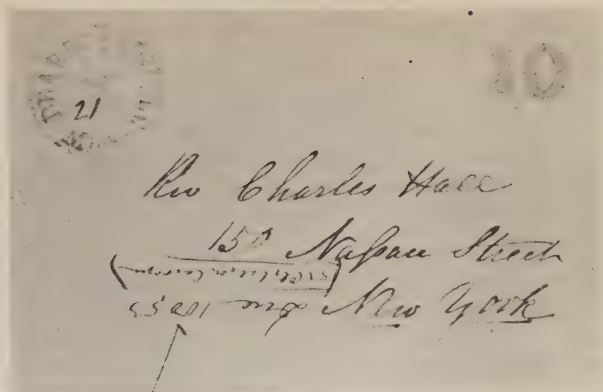
The Rev. Mr. Nall's son, James Jr., was a prominent dry goods merchant in Detroit, with his store located in 1863 at 74 Woodward Avenue.

Each of these three letters is postmarked with the red circular postmark of Dearbornville. It is a scarce postal marking on a stampless cover. The name of the post office was not officially changed to Dearborn until 1875.

Dearborn Jan 21- 1851

My Dear Brother

As my engagement with the Churches of Dearborn and Flat Rock commenced on the 20th of July, and I did not receive my commission till the middle of Dec. I was not able to report to you my labors for the first quarter. I must therefore now report for this half year. As the Churches are sixteen miles from each other I am obliged to supply them alternately. This I have done every Sabbath from the beginning. In Dearborn Village I preach morning and evening and then go into the country about five miles to preach in the afternoon. At Flat Rock I preach in the morning, and then go to Gibraltar in the



afternoon, a distance of six miles to a branch of the same church. And some times I preach either in Flat Rock or its vicinity on Sat'y evening.

Our Congregations in all the places have considerably increased, and the attention with which they listen to the word, and the improved spirit of prayer, lead me to look for better days.

There is one circumstance I ought to mention to you as very gratifying. On the last Sabbath of the year I delivered two discourses suited to the occasion. At the close of the day one of our Grog sellers sent a message to me saying that he would be glad to see me. I went and he told me what he had felt, and that he had resolved with the closing year forever to close his Grogery. After expressing my thankfulness and giving him such counsel as the occasion required I left him assuring him that I should soon return to see if he carried his resolve into practice. I did so and found that he had redeemed his pledge. His wife told me that she had long been uneasy on account of their business. She stated that she had not only been troubled in the day, but that she had been often disturbed with dreams and visions in the night. On one occasion she thought that a pious Mother who had been long dead appeared to her, and reproached her for the business in which they were engaged. I have the happiness now to state that this man, who it is said made more drunkards than any other in the village, has not only closed his grogery, but is heard regularly to take part in our prayer meetings.

We have no regular preaching on week days, as it is difficult to get people to week day services, Still I am frequently engaged in different parts of the country during the week.

I have had sickness in my family ever since I came here, but thank God my own health is good so that I am able to labor, and to labor hard to win souls to Christ.

As my wants are pressing at the present time, I shall esteem it a great favor if you would send me the amount due me at as early a period as practicable.

I am

Faithfully

Yours

James Nall

To

Rev Charles Hall

* * * * *

Dearborn, July 30, 1851

My Dear Brother

The year for which I was commissioned to labor as a Missionary in connection with the A.H.M.S. expired on the 20th of the present month.

I have nothing that is particularly interesting to communicate. Our Congregations have generally increased during the year both in members and interest. Two have been added to the Church at Flat Rock on the profession of their faith.

We have taken up collections in the different stations in behalf of your Society which amounts to 19 dol 8 cents. Dearborn 10 dollars 8 cents, and Flat Rock 9 dol, which you will please to deduct from the sum now due, and forward to me the balance.

I expect my field of labor to be somewhat changed during the present year. I have been invited by the church at Wayne to take charge of them in connection with Dearborn, and as this place is quite as important as Flat Rock, 10 miles nearer, and will render me less burdensome to your society I have

given them encouragement to expect half of my labor, Should I leave the people at the Rock it will be with regret but with hope that they will soon be supplied with a missionary who can live among them.

I am

my dear brother

Yours in the Gospel of Christ

James Nall

Rev. Charles Hall, D.D.

* * * * *

Dearborn Wayne Co Michigan
March 1--1852

My Dear Brother

I forward you my March report. Dearborn Church is Presbyterian in the Town of Dearborn in the County of Wayne State of Michigan. Wayne Church is Congregational in the Town of Nankin, Wayne Co. Church members in both Churches 39 males 16 females. Average attendance 160. Admitted by profession 3 By letter 2 Scholars 155. Books in Lib 360. Mem. of Temperance Society 795. Contributions for the three Societies \$35.18

We have built a steeple to our Church in Dearborn and purchased a Bell.

I am

Yours in Christ

To

Rev Charles Hall D.D.

James Nall

P S Post office address Dearborn

The value of these old missionary letters from an historical standpoint is illustrated by this 1845 letter from the Rev. Samuel Newbury. The first history of Allegan County, printed in 1880, tells of the organization of the Presbyterian Church of Allegan in 1836, with the Rev. William Jones as its first pastor. It then lists the several ministers serving the church, with the years served. From this list it would appear that the Rev. Samuel Newbury served the Allegan church from 1842 until 1845.

But these county histories, extremely valuable as they are to the student of early Michigan history, were written years after the happening of the events narrated, and usually in reliance upon human memory. Few newspapers or written records were available from which accurate information might be obtained. The wonder is that these old histories are as accurate as they are.

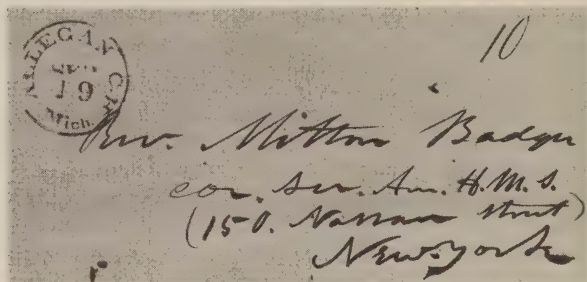
In any event, it seems certain that the Rev. Samuel Newbury was the missionary at the Allegan church first in the Fall of 1844 and not in 1842 as the history states. It is quite possible, however, that Newbury had assisted the Rev. William Jones in the establishment of that church, as both of these men were at the time members of the St. Joseph Presbytery, Jones at St. Joseph, and Newbury at White Pigeon, where he served for a period as the first principal of the Branch University located there.

Jones had preceded the Rev. Ira Wead at Ypsilanti, where one biographer refers to him as "a zealous but very eccentric man," but left that pastorate abruptly for St. Joseph.

Newbury, who was the father of the wife of Governor John J. Bagley, was not only interested in his missionary work, as is clearly evidenced by his letter, but in public education. Besides serving as principal of the Branch University at White Pigeon, as above mentioned, Newbury assisted Samuel F. Drury, prominent Otsego merchant, in the establishment of a teachers institute at

Otsego, which eventually resulted in the formation of the Michigan State Normal School. Probably because of this service to public education Newbury was appointed to the State Board of Education, serving in 1849 and 1850.

This letter was postmarked with the black circular marking of Allegan C. H. (Court House).



Allegan, Mich. Sept. 18, 1845.

Rev. Milton Badger,
Cor. Sec. A.H.M.S.
N. York

Dear sir,

The year for which I commenced Miss. labour in this place is now closed. The difficulties in this church resulted in my dismission last April. Since which time I have not preached to this congregation--but as the whole western half of this county was destitute of presb. preaching, I thought it my duty to remain in the county and supply those destitute places. I have preached monthly at four different stations. All these places very much need the preaching of the Gospel, and constant emigration is increasing the number of the inhabitants at those places and multiply other points of like destitution. I established two more Sab. schools and revived two others during the summer, and have in part supplied them with libraries lent us from the Mass. S. S. Society. I have no fixed plan for the coming year. It is impossible for me to continue to supply those destitute places without foreign aid. I have received as yet no

compensation for the last six months labour except a few presents, and I expect but little. My commission for six months (and it ought to have been for the whole year) expired last March, and although not labouring now under a commission from you, yet I thought it proper to give you this short report of my labours during the last half of the year which I commenced with you, and if the committee sees proper to grant me the other fifty dollars which I expected when the year commenced, it will be very thankfully rec'd, but if I am denied this which I have faithfully earned and which I had a right to expect, I trust that God will supply some other means for the wants of my family.

Your obt. servant

Saml Newbury

(A penned notation at the bottom of the letter, presumably placed there in the New York office of the American Home Missionary Society, is as follows: (No draft due)

ERASTUS N. NICHOLS

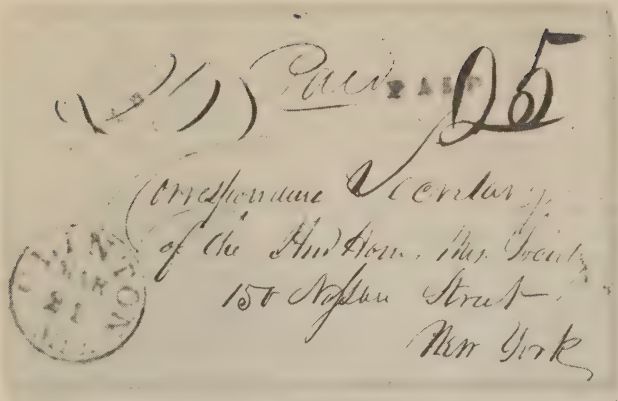
Coming to Michigan Territory in 1835, and serving several churches in Lenawee County until his death almost fifty years later (1882), the Rev. Erastus N. Nichols is typical of the early missionary who gave his all to the community to which he had first come as a missionary.

A history of Lenawee County, published in 1909, says very little of the Presbyterian Church at Clinton, except that it was started by the Rev. Noah Wells of Detroit "in the early '40s" - - "but was dissolved many years ago." There are many inaccuracies in this particular history, however, and this is apparently one of them, as the first letter here reproduced, written in 1839, refers to "a Presbyterian Society at Clinton", where the Rev. Erastus Nichols probably was serving at the time. In this connection, however, it must be pointed out that often a "society" was formed before a "church" was actually organized, so it is possible that the "Presbyterian Society at Clinton" had not been organized formally into a church at the time this 1839 letter was written.

Nichols not only served in his capacity as missionary and minister, but he entered into the lay activities of the community. For many years he was a member and an officer of the county Pioneer Society. At the annual reunion of that society in 1878 Nichols had a part, and the record states that the "Rev. E. N. Nichols, who has the honor of being the oldest resident clergyman in Tecumseh, then followed with an appropriate prayer."

We reproduce three letters, two of them written by Nichols and one with a postscript written by him. The last letter suggests that he might go to another field of labor, but from available records it would appear that he remained in the area until his death many years later, although he is listed as one of the ministers who served the White Pigeon Presbyterian Church for a period.

All three of the Nichols letters were mailed at Clinton, and each one bears the red circular townmark of that post office.



Bridgewater, Washtenaw County, Mich.
March 20th, 1839.

To the Secretaries of the A.H.M. Society
150 Nassau Street N. York

Dear and Beloved Brethren,—The object of the following communication is, if possible, to obtain the aid of your Society in supporting the gospel in our place. Though it may be very true, in point of worthiness, that our claims upon your assistance are small, yet when our wants are contemplated few indeed would come in before us. We are a feeble band amid wide moral wastes. Our natural fields & woodlands are beautiful indeed and our soil is of rare productiveness. Soon they will afford us all that's needful for this life; But, some of us are looking beyond the present time, and want the bread of life eternal. This our fields produce not. Still however we are willing to make a sacrifice of such as they do afford for the support of the gospel & it's hallowed institutions. Without help from abroad however, our best efforts will prove of no avail. We have laid the subject before our heavenly Father and have come to the conclusion that we may & ought to appeal to your Society. We shall simply furnish the demanded statistics, and leave you to judge as to the propriety of your granting us the needed assistance.

Our church was organized in July last and then consisted of Nineteen members, mostly from the church in Clinton. Four

others have since been added so that our present number is Twenty three.

As we have not been favored with regular preaching we can hardly specify the number of our congregation. We think from Seventy five to twice that number, according to circumstances may be expected to attend--say one hundred on an average.

There is a Presbyterian Society at Clinton Four miles South of us. There is also a small Presbyterian Society at Manchester about the same distance to the N.W. East, there is no church of our order till we get to Lodi Twelve miles. West there is none for Twenty miles. There is a neighborhood of Baptists nearby us, though no regularly organized Baptist church nearer than Clinton and Manchester. We have some few Brethren and Sisters of the Methodist denomination but no church. Thus you will see that our prospects are fair for erecting a substantial church of our order provided we succeed in obtaining a preached gospel.

We must raise for the support of the minister we have in view--and we can obtain no other so cheap--Three hundred dollars a year. This we feel to be really less than he ought to have. Of this amount we have succeeded in getting subscribed Two hundred and can do no more. Of coarse we shall want from your Society, an appropriation of One Hundred. On your decision as to whether it shall be granted or not, depends, so far as we can now see, the question as to whether we shall enjoy or remain without the stated means of grace. The minister we have in view is the Rev'd Alexander B. Corning. He has for some time past been in your employ and hence we have no need to forward his credentials. He is now with us and his deportment and labors are universally acceptable and a blessing has already crowned his labors among us. We have a revived state of religious feeling in the church, of late and one or two hopeful conversions.

Our Post office address is Clinton, Lenawee County, Michigan.

In behalf of the Presbyterian Society of Bridgewater, Wash-tenaw County, Michigan.

Timothy Bancroft)	
)	
Jacob Hovey	)	Elders
)	
Norman Calhoun)	

I hereby certify that the statements in foregoing communication are correct, and that, in my estimation the Society in Bridgewater really need and may with propriety--should you think the funds allow it--enjoy the above specified assistance from the A.H.M. Society.

Erastus N. Nichols

* * * * *



Clinton, Lenawee Co. Mich. March 31, 1846

Rev. Milton Badger D.D. Cor. Sect. A.H.M. Society 150 Nassau Street New York.---My Dear Sir,

As I have been ill--under the influence of a bilious fever--for the past three weeks, my statistical report which should be in your possession tomorrow, has been necessarily delayed. My strength is not yet regained but through the kind hand of my God upon me, I am able to sit up--to sit at my desk & write a few lines, "as in duty bound." I will not spend time, or the little strength I have, in detailing particulars other than those specified in my "commission" and renewed again in the H. Missionary etc, especially as my "Quarterly Report" falls due in the course of a month, where they will be more in place, and I may hope to be more able to arrange them. The Report which I hereby present is of

The first Presbyterian Church Clinton, Lenawee Co. Michigan.

E. N. Nichols, Missionary.

Post office address, Clinton, Lenawee Co. Michigan

No. of hopeful conversions	4
" added to the Ch on profession	1
" " " " by letter	0
" S. School scholars	30
" vols in S.School Library	150
" Temperance Subscribers	400 not <u>all in our society</u>
" Churches organized	0

Contributions to Benevolent objects--

To the Bible cause	\$14.00
" For. Mission "	24.60
" Home Missions	20.00 i.e. including my contribution of \$5.00 which I made sometime last autumn if I recollect correctly.

We observe the Monthly Concert of prayer for For. Missions, so called, but are particular to include, as an equally important object, the H. Missionary Enterprise, influenced by the sentiment of Dr. Howes--"If we would evangelize the World we must take care of our own country."

Our village Temperance Society has held meetings, pretty regularly, once in two weeks ever since early last fall, and the results have been successful & happy.

I think of nothing else of special interest. I will just say however, that, although we have had no revival of religion, in the common acceptance of the term, yet religious feeling in the church has been in a better state during the past three months than formerly and a general seriousness has pervaded the minds of my entire people & some, as above stated, have hopefully submitted their hearts to God. There are others that have been induced to hope but by means, which I cannot here specify, but in which I have no confidence.

I am, Dear Sir, your very unworthy Missionary but sincere and affectionate friend

E. N. Nichols

P.S. I rec'd the Society's draft of \$25---bearing date the 12th of February, (after it had taken something like a tour of the United States) some three weeks since--all right.

E. N. Nichols

Clinton, May 30. 1847

To the Cor. Sect. A.H.M. Society
No. 150 Nassau Street, N.Y.

Very Dear Brother: My commission from your Society expired last week. I hasten to furnish my report, and take leave again of an Institution whose aid has been a comfort to me, to many hundreds of poor ministers and churches in the West, and, I trust, the means of good, directly or indirectly, for time and eternity, in every quarter of the globe.

My labors have been the same during the last quarter as they have generally been for the year together. And, though no special good has appeared in the conversion of sinners, yet our congregation has been as large as formerly and apparently as interested in hearing the truth. During the quarter an effort has been made to reunite the Presbyterian and Congregational churches. As yet the enterprise is not accomplished and, I fear, will not be. Still, as Mr. -----, the Congregational minister--with whom the Presbyterians were not pleased on account of the peculiar views which he held on the subject of sanctification--is now gone, I hope that a more friendly state of things will be produced. Our ch. is seriously reduced by removals the past year so that they all feel poor. They have raised \$300.00 and feel that they can pay no more in their reduced condition. They have requested me to stay with them another year for that amount. I cant do it.

As I cant stay for so small an amount and they may not expect any further aid from your Society, I hope that they will, on this amount, feel more disposed to yield every thing lawful to be yielded for the sake of harmony and ability. If no union is effected I fear the Presbyterian Church must, after all, go down. If they should unite with the Congregationalists it would tend to bring back that Church from the direction of Oberlin to which they have so decidedly been tending in times past--until if (of) late. At present however they appear to be getting sensible that something besides the influence of Oberlin will be necessary in order to renovate the world. Whether I shall continue to labor here is uncertain. The Congregationalists have given up their minister & some of them would like to have me given up too so as to appear on equal footing with Presbyterians, though they have no prejudice against me individually, as man or as a minister. Mean time I am going to Cincinnati and may commit myself elsewhere. In short little can be known at present what course things are to take here. I hope God will direct & save his people and cause his glorious truth to pre-

vail. I have been with them in friendship and, if I leave them, 'twill be without any contention or strife.

Our people all feel greatly indebted to the A.M.S. for its aid in time past, and also feel that it has been the means of preserving the light of truth which for a time appeared to flicker & tend to extinction, but which is again beginning to be appreciated and sought after by others than themselves. This is certainly some small degree of reward and we hope will continue to increase.

This is no small source of satisfaction to me. If I have been no otherwise useful I think I have been enabled to hold up the light of truth and in a manner that has convinced some that were wild that it is in a long run at least more practical than error. And should my work, in the issue, appear to be done here, I trust the Lord will conduct me to a field elsewhere in which I may still do good. This I leave with him. Expressing my heartfelt gratitude to your Society I subscribe myself

Yours truly

E. N. Nichols

Our account, if I mistake not, is as follows---

A. H. M. Society to E.N.Nichols		Dr.
To services for one Quarter ending Jany 31st, 1847		\$25.00
" " " " " " April 30th "		<u>25.00</u>
		50.00
Credit--paid to A.B.C. Missions		5.00
(as I suppose) to A.H.M.Society		5.00
Cash from the Pres. Soc. Clinton		<u>8.00</u>
	Deduct	<u>18.00</u>
	Due	\$32.00

for which you will please forward me a draft.

E. N. Nichols

HENRY HORATIO NORTHROP

The Rev. Henry Horatio Northrop came to Michigan much later than most of the other missionaries whose letters are reproduced in this volume. A New Yorker by birth, Northrop came to Michigan sometime around 1840. His first pastorate was at Dexter, after which he moved to White Pigeon, where he was serving at the time he wrote this 1844 letter. The "brothers" mentioned in the letter we shall refer to as Br. X, Y and Z for obvious reasons. Each was an ordained minister and had actually served some of the churches in Michigan.

The criticism of Br. X for not spending all of his time at his missionary assignment, but spending some of it in tending a farm which he had acquired, points up one of the problems which confronted all of the missionaries who accepted commissions from the American Home Missionary Society.

The salary paid most of the missionaries was from three to four hundred dollars per year, payable quarterly. Often the portion of the salary which was to be paid by the local church was not paid in cash, but in produce or other commodities which could be conveniently spared by the parishioners. Despite this meagre salary, the missionary was supposed to devote his full time to his missionary efforts, and he was subjected to severe criticism by his fellow clergymen, as well as by the sponsoring agency, if he departed from strictly adhering to that pattern. It is not suggested that such requirement was wrong or unfair, but we merely point out that it did exist.

Northrop, after leaving the White Pigeon church in 1845, served successively in Homer, Monroe and Flint, in which latter church he served his longest and probably his most important pastorate. He served the Flint Presbyterian Church until 1873, but remained in that community and died there in 1905.

Despite his frank criticism of Br. X, Northrop himself was interested in secular matters, although it must be admitted they were of a civic or philanthropic nature.

He served as a regent of the University of Michigan from 1854 to 1858, and he was also a trustee of Olivet College for a period. He proved his national patriotism by enlisting and serving as a chaplain with the 13th Michigan Infantry in the Civil War, being honorably discharged in the Fall of 1862.

The Northrop letter was mailed from the White Pigeon office on Washington's birthday, 1844. It is postmarked with the circular handstamp of that office, struck in red.

White Pigeon, Feb 22nd 1844

Rev Milton Badger

Dear Brother

Your letter stating some objections to reappointing Br X has come to hand, and the first opportunity for answering it I embrace. Your objections are forcible and generally well founded. Tho I think no injury would redound to your Society in Lima, for reappointing Br X except among his warm opposers. As near as I can learn as a general thing, Br X goes to his Millgrove appointments on Friday & Saturday & visits, & preaches on the Sabbath & returns on Monday. He freely acknowledges that, situated as he is away from his people, he does not do for them as much as he could did he live among them. I have no doubt his farm (for by the way it is a good one & well cultivated) has the same effect upon him th't it would on ministers generally who sh'd attempt to cultivate it & take charge of a congregation, one or the other must be neglected. This was the cause why Br X was compelled years ago to leave the church & congregation in this place, & the same cause was instrumental in his removal subsequently from Lima church, (tho he still insists that he ought to be pastor of this latter congregation). They complained not of him as being destitute of talent, but that he did not study his sermons & bestow sufficient pastoral labour. His farm was the cause of all his trouble. That his farm is a great detriment to his usefulness as a minister while he lives upon it & cultivates it there cannot be a shadow of doubt.

Dear Brother, what I now say let it be confidential. I have never approved of Brother X, with his farm on his hands & with his worldly spirit, as a missionary. He is a brother who is peculiarly calculated to make trouble, wherever things do

not go to suit his mind. The church at Lima had much difficulty in getting freed from him, and at one time it was feared, he would divide the church. So determined was he to labour there that the Presby was compelled to adopt a resolution recommending him unless specially invited not to labour there. In giving my signature to his request for aid I have regarded it rather as the chh's request & the aid granted as bestowed upon them. When the churches make the request & where the churches are truly such as should be aided by your Society & when the minister for whom such aid is sought is in good & regular standing a member of our Presby I hardly know how to avoid giving my signature tho there may be many things about it with which I am not pleased.

How Br X's people are pleased with his labours I know not. This information I can only obtain except by letter or by going on the ground. I have remonstrated with Br X conc'g the impropriety of cultivating a farm and having charge of a church at the same time, but he insists that his farm does not occupy more of his time & attention than his brethren (who have no farms) spend in their domestic affairs. It is desirable that some missionary who will devote himself entirely to the work should occupy this field; & until such a one can be obtained, I am of the opinion that some portion of what the churches ask, should be granted to Bro. X and perhaps it would be well to state the reasons why a full grant was not allowed.

I would say something concerning Br Y did I not suppose Mr Clarke your general missionary had written you on the subject --he lives on a farm away from his people like Br X. and the people in Bristol feel that if they make any advance they must have more labour & another man.

About Brother Z I hope Br Clarke has given you an account of him, he has injured the ministry and the missionary Society & the cause of Christ by his imprudence. The woman who was his companion in folly has made a public confession I have heard of none from Brother Z.

Ever feeling a deep interest in your Society & willing most cheerfully by any means in my power to aid you permit me to subscribe myself your friend & fellow labourer in the cause of our Common Master

Henry H. Northrop

GEORGE C. OVERHISER

The Rev. George C. Overhiser, a native New Yorker, came to Michigan somewhat later than many of the missionaries whose reports are here reproduced. He did not reach Michigan until 1839, at which time he was 28 years of age. Overhiser served as pastor of the Ionia Presbyterian Church in the middle forties, and we reproduce a letter from him written midway in that decade.

The Rev. Mr. Overhiser realized the hope that he expressed in this letter, that of organizing a church in Otisco. He served that church also for some time. His request for his compensation for "my second quarter" indicates that in 1845 the Ionia church was also receiving some support, at least, from the East.

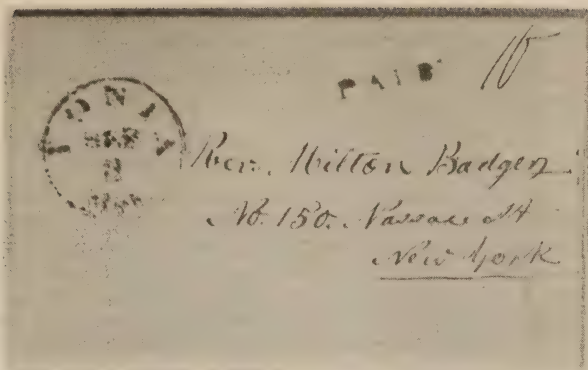
Overhiser remained in Ionia, where he passed away in 1888 at the age of 77 years. His letter here is most interesting, and it reveals some of the trials and tribulations, as well as some of the high rewards, which was the lot of these missionary spirits.

Overhiser's letter was mailed from the Ionia office, and bears the circular handstamp of that post office, struck in red. Overhiser incorrectly dated his letter as "Dec. 1." Both the postmark shown on the cover, and a notation on the back of the cover made at the home office in New York, show this to have actually been a September, 1845, letter.

George C. Overhiser, Ionia, Ionia County
Michigan Dec. 1, 1845

Rev. and dear Brother Badger,

I sit down to make my second quarterly report, with mingled emotions of pleasure and pain. My heart is pained, because I have so little to write that is encouraging; because the ways of Zion mourn, and so few come to her solemn feast. It is truly afflicting, to see the perishing refuse the bread of life. I am frequently constrained to cry: Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?



Though frequently cast down, and many times in tears, yet I do not despair; for there are some tokens for good.

After much effort, I have succeeded in organizing a presbyterian Church in Otisco, with eleven members. and there are about as many more who probably will unite at our next Communion, which will be in four weeks from yesterday.

Otisco is filling up as fast as any town in this County, and I am in hopes the time is not far distant in which we shall have a church there sufficiently strong to support a minister without foreign aid.

There is a strong influence against us at present. The baptist are quite numerous, and determined to have everything go by water. They have preaching one half of the time, by an Elder VanVleck; and they have an Elder Chase residing there, who is striving to immerse everything.

There are quite a large number of Christians in Otisco--they have preaching a part of the time, and expect a Minister to settle among them this fall. The Methodist have a strong hold in this place--and will have preaching one half of the time, as soon as their Ministers return from conference. Hence, you see, the support of the gospel is very much divided---Add to this the newness of the country, and the difficulties which people contend with in improving new lands; and you see we can expect but little aid from Otisco at present.

My congregations, in this place, are large and very attentive. I meet with a hearty well-come from every quarter--The old and the young, the professor, and the non professor,

all meet me with pressing invitations to call at their dwellings, and partake of their hospitality.

We have two Sabbath schools in Otisco, that are in a flourishing condition.

We have formed a temperance Society of fifty members. There is no grog shops in this Town.

I received some Tracts from Brother Smith, and should be glad of many more; for many families are scattered through the woods, who get but very little to read, and they receive these little volumes with a great deal of gratitude. A tract here, becomes an itinerant, that goes preaching from house to house--frequently one travels through a whole neighborhood, and makes deep impressions on many minds.

In Ionia, we have received, by letter, two members this quarter--a man and his wife, who will be a great help to us, spiritually and temporally.

The baptists have always had a desided influence in their favor in Ionia. All the first settlers were of that order, and have had the controll of every thing until recently. They expect a Minister on from the East, the first of this month. When he arrives we shall be under the necessity of procuring some new place for worship, as we have used the baptist church during the summer.

The Episcopalians own a small church here, which I am trying to purchase. Whether I shall accomplish it or not, I am unable to say. My people are divided about it--some think we can buy it--and others think we are not able--I hope the Lord will guide all to his own glory. We are unhapily situated in the church. We have not a male member residing in the village. We live from two to five miles from it, in all directions. This makes it embarassing on many accounts. It is impossible to sustain a weekly prayer meeting, which is a source of great affliction to me, for I consider them the life of the church. Again it is very difficult to get the members to consenstrate their efforts to purchase a house in the village, for every one wishes to do something in his own immediate neighborhood. We have good congregations in Ionia and I hope, by the blessing of God, our situation will be more pleasant soon. We have a County Sabbath School celebration in Ionia on the twelfth of this month, which I hope will result in much good. My heart bleeds because Zion mourns in the wilderness. Myself and family

are healthy and happy in our work. If you can send me a draft for Fifty Dollars for my second quarter, it will come in a time of need. Pray for us, who are in the wilderness.

Yours in love---

Rev. Milton Badger

George C. Overhiser

ORSON PARKER

One of the early missionaries in the Saginaw Valley was the Rev. Orson Parker, a New Englander. Considered by some, at least, as somewhat eccentric, Parker was unquestionably an able evangelist, and conducted several revival meetings in the early churches of the state which resulted in substantial accessions to the church.

In Flint he preceded the Rev. Peter Stryker Van Nest, and was regarded as the first regular pastor of the Congregational Church of that community. One narrator says of Parker that he considered his one-year contract to mean that he was to preach the equivalent of two sermons a Sunday for 52 weeks, or 104 sermons, and that by holding revival meetings and other services he could shorten the time, and within a few months would have delivered his 104 sermons, whereupon he demanded his years salary.

He is also reported to have instructed his attorney in Flint, when a certain member refused to pay his pledge to the church to "levy on his household goods, and if he don't pay, throw him and them into the street. Yours in Christ, O. Parker."

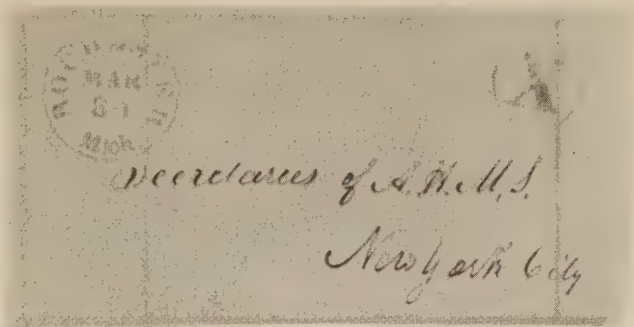
In the Fall of 1838, probably while still serving the Flint church, Parker conducted a series of very successful revival services in the Saginaw Presbyterian Church.

Later Parker went to the Rochester Congregational Church, serving there from 1846 to 1848, and it was while serving in that pastorate that he wrote the two letters which we here reproduce.

These two letters bear the Rochester circular handstamp, struck in red, the prevailing color for cancellations during this period.

Rochester March 26 1847

Dr Brethren As my March report came so near the close of my second quarter I did not think it necessary to make out another report so soon, as all that could inform or interest you



was inclosed in that report-- But on examining my commission I observe that it was necessary to make out quarterly reports.

Since my last report there has nothing transpired with us of unusual interest--We have had for some time past a slow work of grace in progress here which still continues and some thirty souls or more have been converted--The past week I was called to visit and pray with some anxious sinners one of whom had very deep feelings but does not yet find her savior. Our meetings are well attended on the Sabbath as also the prayer meetings.

The most of the conversions have been among the Scholars of the Academy. Several of them are very interesting young men--Two weeks ago we had a communion too (two) united with the Chh and others stand propounded--I find some difficulty in getting people who indulge hopes into the chh in this place wh does not exist in others. In consequence of the many difficulties and trials in this chh. for the past three years, some prejudices exist against the chh wh are used by our enemies who assume the responsibility of directing young converts what chh to join, altho, they took no interest in their welfare while they remained impenitent---And another obstacle in the way of some of the young is that the Principal of the Academy is considered a very good Christian and belongs to no church and, thinks as he is a little uncertain about the mode of Baptism that he can live as well out of the chh, and such is his influence as a man, and as a Christian that his example is followed by some, who do not expect to be permanent inhabitants of the place--

I have presented the suffering condition of Ireland, to my people and the next day a town meeting was called and we are

now putting forth by a large committee to gather the free will offering of the people and forward the same, to N. York---As soon as the going is good I shall present the claims of the A.H.M.S. I fear we may have one or two cases of discipline but I hope and pray they may be avoided.

You may remit to me the amt. due me from your society for my missionary labors the last quarter.

Yours in the Gospel of Christ

O. Parker

Messrs. Hall & Badger, Sec's'

of H.M.

* * * * *

Rochester Oakland Co Mich
March 26 1848

Dear Brethren Hall & Badger

I have labor(ed) as a missionary in behalf of your society for the last three months with the Congregational Church in Avon--My annual report has but just been made out and forwarded to you which contains all the facts and statistical information that I could now give--We have had an interesting revival of religion the past winter, in the bounds of our Society. About 50 have been hopefully converted. Many of them are students connected with the high school in this place and are not residents of our town,

Tomorrow we have a church meeting to receive and examine candidates who may apply for admission. Some very interesting cases of conversions have taken place the past winter--The church is feeble, has but little moral power, but the most of them have been revived--Our Baptist brethren who worship in another part of this town have moved into the village and now make this place the center of their operation, which diminishes our congregation a little but as a general thing we have a good congregation, and the prospects of this chh are brightening.

We have received five into our chh. on profession since my last report--

I have learned by the Agent of the H.M.S. for this state that my commission has been renewed. There is now due me from our Society Seventy five dollars which you may forward to me as soon as the funds of your Society will permit.

Yours in Christ Jesus

Rev. Hall & Badger

O. Parker

P.S. Deducting \$10 for Hall money collected in this chh which I have received leaves me now due but \$65.

A.P.

March 29th. After sending this to the post office I rec'd yours of the 22 inst. informing me that a check had been sent--that letter has not been rec'd. There is an Avon P.O. in Iona (Ionia) Co Mich. If you will write to the Post Master to forward any letter which may be lodged in his office I will write you and if the draft is forwarded to me from that office I will give you no further trouble about it.

O. P.

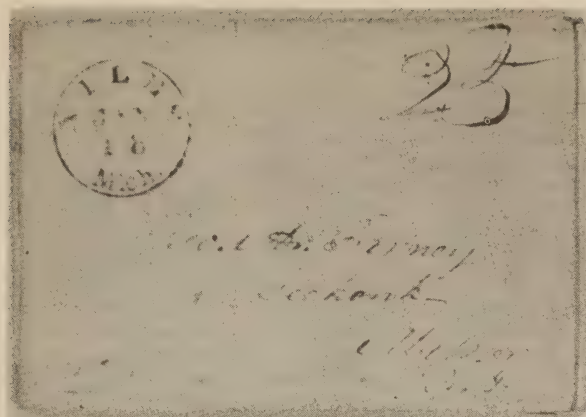
J. N. PARSONS

Very little can be learned of the Rev. J. N. Parsons as far as work in Michigan is concerned. This may be accounted for by the fact that he was commissioned to work in Wisconsin and in all probability spent the major portion of his time in that territory.

The fact that in the Fall of 1839 "the roads had become almost impassable," his horse and family "worn out," and "navigation on Lake Michigan suspended" which left him stranded in Niles while en route to Wisconsin, has resulted in his furnishing us with two of the most colorful and informative letters in this entire group. His two letters, to two different groups, are repetitious, as could be expected, but tell us much of conditions as he found them in this western Michigan town. Niles, at the time, had a population of 1420 persons, as compared to only 9102 in Detroit. It was one of the most important towns in Western Michigan.

The "br Warriner" of White Pigeon to whom Parsons refers as his benefactor and co-laborer was probably the Rev. Levi Warriner, at one time the Methodist minister at Cold Water. The "Branch University," of which the Rev. Wm. Whiting is mentioned as the principal, was really the Niles branch of the University of Michigan, which was actually an academy. There were originally eight such "branches," with more added at a later date. The Niles branch was opened two years before the arrival there of the Rev. Mr. Parsons, with Joseph Whiting as the first principal.

We are deeply indebted to Mr. Parsons for these illuminating letters, both of which were written within two weeks of each other, with a later postscript to the second letter. They were mailed at the Niles post office, with the circular handstamp of that office struck in black. The first letter is addressed to Rev. Abr. Barney at Sekonk, "Mass. or R.I.", the second to Badger and Hall.



Niles, (Mich.) Jan. 15, 1840

Dear br. Barney

Unexpected delays on our journey prevented me from having any thing to communicate to you as soon as we contemplated, & I am obliged now to steal from most delightful public duties to get time enough to write you. And I must pass over all the incidents of our journey to inform you that we are in the midst of the most glorious revival I have ever known at the west, a few particulars of which I will communicate.

I came to this place, which is the head of navigation on the St. Joseph, 25 miles from lake Michigan, by accidentally (rather Providentially) losing my way on the evening of Friday Nov. 15. & by conversation with br. Whiting Principal of the Branch University, who had been supplying the church nearly a year, was induced to rest over the Sabbath. Monday Morning the Session called on me, & requested me, as the weather had become severe & the roads almost impassable in places, between here & the field of my Destination, to tarry with them for the winter. To this proposition I felt persuaded that the faithfulness to the Design of my mission would allow me, under the circumstances, to accede, as the whole region is Missionary ground. I accordingly commenced my labors.

The chh had been formed 5 years, & a methodist chh about as long, & I was soon told by members of the Session that there

never had been a sinner converted here from the settlement of the place. They had a weekly prayer meeting, on Wed. eve, which I found attended by two or three brethren & as many Sisters. At the first, I was rather disheartened, as these half dozen were scattered all over the chh. The 2nd, I endeavored to render more interesting, told the story of the good mother of Israel that had an excellent meeting when the "Lord Jesus & she were there & no body else." We agreed to remove to a school house, & say to others that we expected a good meeting. It was a snow storm, but there were just as many as there were at the first weekly prayer meeting under the gospels when Jesus came & said, "Peace be unto you," & breathed on them & said "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Most of them were male members, & two of the Session who had been going with me from house to house, stated some thrilling facts they had learned about the reproach which the world were throwing on religion through the inconsistency of professors. The members present were deeply convicted, & confessed their sins. The next day, we had a church meeting appointed, & three quarters of all the members in town were present, & all but one or two humbled themselves before God. From this time it was evident that God was in our midst. I had been preaching almost entirely to the chh. The next Sabbath, which was the last in the year, I preached to sinners, & invited any serious, to my study the next night. Two of our most respectable merchants came, indulging hope. From this time the work progressed in a most interesting manner, in the church & out of it. The next Sabbath, the meeting house which had not been a third part full, was well filled, though a tempestuous day, & the Sacrament administered. Our inquiry meeting has increased till my study is full, & last Monday we had thirteen prayers in succession without rising by young converts (young men) ten of whom had not prayed before. Yest. br. Whiting was sick & I sent an invitation to the students any who were disposed to call at my study. To my surprise 16 came--we spent the whole forenoon in conversation & prayer--ten of them prayed in succession, but one a professor--in the P.M. five more prayed--nearly every member of the Branch is anxious or rejoicing.

The Methodists share in the work as largely as we do. There have been meetings in both societies for three weeks every night, & our brethren say there is not a man woman or child in town unmoved--a gang of infidels got together & curse the work & the measures & the converts--one of them once a student in Theology. The last three days are days of wondrous glory & we confidently hope the work is just commencing. It

begins to be felt in cong's 5, 10, 35 miles distant. May it go on, increase & never end.

Among those brought to a decided stand, already are a Major in the Army, whose regiment is now in Florida, himself on a furlough & 2 sons; the recent admin. candidate for Lieut. Gov. two sons & a daughter; a young lawyer of promise, who may change his profession & many of our most promising merchants & clerks & all the members of our choir save one young lady, for whom daily prayer is offered--Many children of the sabbath school--All the 16 lads at my house yest. but one, have pious mothers.

There have been a few thrilling incidents, one or two of which I will relate.

One of the two first converts, single person, had just finished & carpeted a room over his store for a club room, where he might get his comrades together, smoke, drink wine & be jolly--when God met him & he went to that room--got on his knees & dedicated himself & it to God. It is used since as a place of prayer for the converts, & a place of retirement for Christians to labor & pray with sinners. As a specimen yest, they got note of a young man, who the night before was at a cotillion party, found him under deep conviction--took him up there & labored with him four hours, till he gave up the controversy. Last night he was out to the prayer meeting rejoicing in Christ. Day before yest. a young merchant who had opposed the revival & hated me for breaking up a Christmas sleigh ride, heard that his little brother prayed at my house the night before, broke down & gave up to the Spirit.

The young lawyer spoken of recently from Mass. graduate of D.C. whom I had received into my family to board said, he never had a serious impression, till the revival commenced, found himself hedged in on every side. He had been in the profession a year in another place, & no one mentioned the subject to him. Here his partner talked with him in the office; if he went into a store he was assailed; if he came up to his meals it was pressed home--he bore it one week & surrendered.

The son of one of our members largely engaged in milling & having many sceptical hands in his employ, a lad of 15 or 16, was accustomed to go to the mill last summer & contend for the bible with the infidels. He attended our sacrament two weeks ago & was awakened, went home--asked one of the worst of them to go up to his chamber--as he entered he burst into tears-& exclaimed "O W--you have ruined my soul? You poi-

sined my mind last summer with your arguing & made me doubt the truth of the bible, & now I am lost & you have ruined my soul!" The fellow was thunderstruck--broke down & renounced his infidelity, tried to sooth his mind but it was no use; he persisted in charging him with his eternal destruction; but told him, if he did believe in God to get down on his knees & pray--he did so, trembling like a leaf--but no relief to the boy. The infidel was so overwhelmed with his guilt that he came to the village--got laudanum--met the boy as he returned --shook hands with him besought his pardon--went to the mill & swallowed the poison--He was suspected & charged but replied "it isn't in the power of God or the Devil to prevent my dying now"--an cathartic was given & his life saved. He now attends chh, & is anxious, if not "in his right mind." O the power of God's Spirit, & the agony of a guilty conscience. Verily "Out of the mouth of babes & sucklings God has ordained strength," as well as "perfected praise."*

Dear brother, cease not to pray for us. I know I have been remembered by the brethren & churches of our conference or God would not have smiled upon such a worm. And I am more & more satisfied that if we will trust in God, he will honor our confidence & glorify himself.

One most interesting part of my labor, & fruit of the work, I have not mentioned. It is the reclaiming of backsliders. Men who have come from your N.E. churches, left their religion behind, or buried it in our forests, & never disclosed their chr chrtr. The number of them is incredible, & the delight of searching out these lost sheep indescribable. I found 8 in one direction, in one P. M. some hungering & thirsting & saying "No Christian has spoken to us since we have been in the country."--others far gone in sin. E.G. one man wife & daughter mems--six children--keeps a groggery inn, sends his children to dancing school--yet has a conscience. O brother you cannot feel the blessedness of Missionary work.

Do not make use of this, except for private circulation among the members of our conference. Please sent it to br. Emory first & ask him to receive it as addressed to him, till I can find time to write. You both have our most aff't remembrance & earnest prayer for your spiritual prosperity & usefulness. Then I want it to go to my dear people in Berkley, & consider the exhortation below as addressed to them.

Your aff. br. J.N.Parsons

*The boy soon found peace in believing.

Dear brethren-- I still weep over the dear people of my former charge, & my heart yearns for your prosperity. The above is but a faint sketch of what God is doing with your poor unworthy pastor. And he is doing it because I have a united church, of less than half your number, who cordially cooperate with me in building up Christ's kingdom. With a tenth part of the effort made & tears shed among you, God has wrought wonders, & I solemnly charge you before God & the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the quick & the dead at his appearing, put away Dissentions from among you; & if any will not cooperate cast them out of the account, & go in the name of the Lord, & consecrate yourselves to him, & do your individual duty, & God will bless you.

Your aff't Pastor

J.N.Parsons

* * * * *

Niles (Mich) Jan. 28. 1840.

Messrs. Badger & Hall--The time has come for me to render you an account of my operations for the first quarter under your commission, & you will probably be surprised to hear from me in Michigan. The reason is, when I arrived here, the roads had become almost impassable, my family & horse worn out, & navigation on lake Michigan suspended. Through a letter from br. Warriner of White Pigeon, a door was opened here for me to tarry for the winter, & I have reason to praise God for the guidance of his gracious Providence. He has been pleased to pour out his Spirit upon us in great power, & wrought wonders of grace, of which I must give you some account.

Niles is a village of 11 or 1200 inhab- about 25 miles from the mouth of St. Joseph in Lake Michigan, surrounded by a most beautiful country of openings & praries. the settlement was commenced 7 or 8 years ago & it has been notorious even at the West, for wickedness. The stores were all open on the Sabbath & that was the great business day. The minester who formed the church five years ago told me he had preached here many a time put up at the tavern and paid his bill, that once when he was preaching on the Sabbath at the sound of a flat boat horn, coming down the River, all his male hearers, but one, left the house to see it. Since that time maney pious families have moved in & a church was gathered five years since

of 7 members, which increased to about 60, by letter & profess--still not a person had ever been known to be converted here down to last Nov. They had a pastor for several years, who was an excellent preacher, but could not converse or visit. He left a year ago, & they were supplied by the Principal of the Branch University, till I arrived. He (Rev. Wm. Whiting) is a first rate preacher, & has prepared the way of the Lord, by "increasing knowledge". I found a weekly & weakly prayer meeting, attended regularly by two brethren & irregularly by one or two more; & as many sisters. My first efforts were to visit all the Church and stir them up to prayer & effort, & to build up the prayer meeting. That became interesting & increased from half a dozen to 11, 35, 50, 60 & 70, where it now continues no matter what may be the weather. The church complained that they were strangers to each other, & I proposed a church meeting, to get acquainted, which has been since held weekly, & has been exceedingly interesting. Many members made the most hearty confession of their sins. at the first, & others since, untill all but one or two male members have come out, & they have shown their sincerity by working in the vineyard.

Of course when the church began to pray & labour, & Zion's children to take delight in her stones, God began to help; I appointed an inquiry meeting, and two of our most promising young merchants came, not to inquire but to speak of deliverance, by the grace of God. The next night several others came, & the next night 15, nearly all indulging hope. This was the first of Dec. & from that time the work has gone on with great power. It has extended to the Methodist Church where many have been hopefully converted, & it is confidently believed that scarce one individual in town has escaped the influence of God's Spirit and we are looking for the conversion of the whole population who have not agrieved away the Spirit finally. The influence has extended to the surrounding country & churches 10 & 35 miles distant are waking up. Twenty nine persons have been received to our church nineteen yest & 47 on trial to the Meth--. I have no means of knowing how many have been brought to the knowledge of the truth. Among those who have been brought out are a Major in the army whose regiment is now in Florida; the late candidate for Lieut. Gov. of the state; a promising young lawyer from Haverhill, Mass grad. of Dartmouth; who may change his profession; a goodly number of Scholars in the University--many of our best Merchents & clerks, & every member of our choir. The face of society is entirely changed. Two young men who kept the onley recess here, have taken an inventory of their stock to sell out because

they cant do aney thing. Their billiard room is deserted their nine pin balls have scarce been heard to roll for weeks, & their bar tender is converted and has left them. They think it very hard that their business should be stopped.

There are maney interesting facts pertaining to individual cases, some of which it may be interesting to you to mention. One of the two young merchants first converted, a very gay young man from Boston, has just finished a room over his store & furnished it for a sort of clerks room to be occupied for jovial purposes, drinking wine etc--the first time it was used he got on his knees and dedicated it to God; it has since been used for prayer meetings of the converts, & a private retirement for the brethren when they wish to converse & pray with a sinner. Maney have there submitted to God.

The case of the young lawyer illustrates the effect of christian faithfulness. He says that he never had a serious impression in his life till after this revival began. He boards in my family & his partner is a church member. He was thus completely hedged in. When in the office his partner kept the subject before him; if he called at one store it was urged upon him, & if he fled to another it followed him, & thus in one week from the time when he would not allow me to pray with him a lone, he was brought to surrender to Christ.

A young man mechanic, that spent \$200 last year at the recess went to a cotillion party Monday evening, was found on Wed. under conviction, was taken to the room above mentioned & labored with by brethren of the church from 10, till 3 oclock when it is hoped he gave himself up to God--He now appears well & is propounded for the Church.

A lad 15 years old, was accustomed last summer to argue with infidels in his fathers employ in favor of the bible. At our first communion he was awakened--went home--asked one of those infidels to go to his chamber--burst in to tears & exclaimed "O W--you have ruined my soul! Your infidel arguments poisoned my mind with doubts, & I am lost, & you have destroyed my soul!" The man was confounded & overwhelmed & began to weep, the boy would not let him off, till he renounced his infidelity & got down on his knees & prayed God to forgive him. Still the crime haunted him and two or three days after he procured laudanum & attempted to destroy his life. O the wages of sin. The boy soon obtained a hope.

A merchant 30 or 35 years old whose step father was a great universalist & his room mate in study an infidel, himself a most profane man, & considered about the hardest case

in Niles, was convicted--stifled his conviction till a week last night, when he burst out in bed "Lord have mercy" & told his wife to send for a christian freind--she sent for a Christian neighbor; & so awful was his state that they called for br. Whiting about midnight to go up to his house. He was calmed down & directed to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. He is now a flaming Christian & a thunderbolt to sinners.

These are a few specimens of the wondrous power of God in converting sinners. There is another department of my labor as a Missionary not less interesting. It is hunting up stray sheep. The country is full of them. I have found more than 40, within 4 miles of here, who were members of the Churches at the East & south & have not removed their relations, & maney have not disclosed their professions since they came to this country. It is delightfull to gather the hungry in to the fold but distressing to find those who do not wish to return. Witherto (Hitherto) no one has cared for their souls or looked after them--& it will take years to reclaim them all. Some have become so afraid of their Shepherd, they prefer to endure the cold winter unsheltered, & submit to lesoning, rather than to return to the fold. But nearley all have consciences susceptible of impression, & I doubt not continued faithful pastoral effort would bring them in.

There is an unlimited field of Missionary ground arround us--At the mouth of the River 25 miles is the Village of St. Joseph, with onley one professor of religion; they have requested me to go down and preach there. North 20 miles are Cassopolis & Whitmanville a co. seat & flourishing vil--having two or three professors, where they have raised a subscription of \$40. & sent an earnest request to bro. Whiting and me to go down and preach; but we cannot either of us leave here at present---O my dear brother I would to God you were here with me to help reap the golden harvest, perishing for lack of laborers. . Will you not come? I have no brother like minded. Br. Whiting is first rate; but occupied all day with his school. If I continue here I shall need no aid from Conference after this year.

It is customary to report the amount of labour performed. I have onley to say--I have endeavored to labor faithfully, warning & exhorting every man night and day with tears, we had 36 meetings in Dec, & 50 in Jan, I have 5 graduates of Eastern Colleges in my Church (4 lawyers & 1 Doct) besides others who "have a mind to word," & who, I hope will continue faithfull unto the coming of the Lord Jesus. We have endeavored to begin as we can hold out.

And now dear Brother, when you communicate these things to the Conference tell them I rest assured that it is in answer to their prayers that God has so soon to bless the labors of their poor fellow servant that I shall long continue to weep at the recollection of the precious scenes I enjoyed among them, & pray that far greater blessings may descend upon all their churches & congregations. May the blessings of many that were ready to perish descend upon them.

Dr. brethren, you will perceive that the body of this report is copied from one addressed to br. Emory of Taunton as Secretary of the conf. of churches. I thought it best on the whole, to send it to both bodies. To the conference through br. Emory I submitted the question, whether they were willing to change my destination to this field, if Providence seem to continue the present prospects of usefulness.

Bro. Peet has accepted a call to Milwaukie. If I should go on to Wisconsin in the Spring would you like to give me the office of an evangelist?

Please forward me the Home Miss. --together with a new commission. My commission was lost in my valise on the Steam boat & such special instructions as you think proper.

Feb. 7. The work of God continues with unabating interest. It is believed that there is more deep feeling & serious reflection now, among thinking men, than at any previous time-- I have established lectures once in two weeks, several miles from the village, in three different directions, & there are encouraging appearances in two of them. If you think best for me to remove, be sure to send some one here.

Yours in the Gospel.

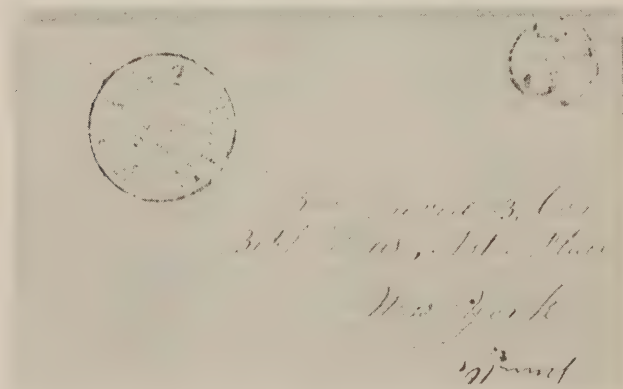
J.N. Parsons

A. B. PRATT

This letter from the Rev. A. B. Pratt concerning the Congregational Society of Genesee Centre comprises all the information we have concerning this minister. Genesee is now known as Mount Morris, on the northern limits of Flint, and this letter tells something of the problems facing the missionary in getting a church organized in this particular area. It also points up the lack of sufficient men to serve the various congregations which were springing up all over lower Michigan. An appeal for more laborers to send into the field is not infrequent in these reports.

The Villages of Clio and Pine Run are in Vienna Township, Genesee County, and it was in this area that the "church in Vienna" which Pratt served for a while, was located.

Pratt's letter was addressed to the "Rev. David B. Coe, Bible House, Astor Place, New York." This was another agency sponsoring missionary work in the state. Although there was a post office at Genesee at the time, this letter from Pratt was mailed from the Flint post office.



Dear Brother Coe

In reviewing the year now closed, though I cannot trace the hand of God manifested in any signal displays of his power in a general revival of his work yet he has not left us without witness, yea he has given us abundant cause to thank him and take courage; We are enabled to report progress, particularly in regard to Genesee, some mercy drops have fallen, a few souls been converted, prayer meetings better sustained than during the previous year, sabbath schools well sustained and interesting; our small and inconvenient places of worship crowded on the sabbath till uncomfortable, and what is still more encouraging than all, a prospect that the long sought and prayed for object, a convenient house of worship, is likely to be attained To this our time and energies have been mainly directed for six months past. Towards it we have \$12.00 pledged among us and the promise of \$200 from the building fund. We have long felt that the prosperity of Zion in this place depended upon the settlement of the question in respect to this house of the Lord and we consider the question now settled unless the Lord has a different view and interposes in his providence to disappoint us. The proposed site is the same as the one spoken of in a former report which was accompanied by a rude draft of the same and the surrounding country. We have organized a new society by the name of the Congregational Society of Genesee Centre. Soon a new church will be organized in connection with it which will embrace substantially the 1 & 2 churches of Genesee. For a few years we shall be as largely dependant on your aid as heretofore but there is every prospect of our becoming a selfsustaining church at no very remote period. The reason why a church has not been sooner organized is the prospect that it would not be well sustained and promise permanency without a church edifice. We wished to secure this latter first which we now feel has been done. From this you will understand why our next application will be made in the name of the society instead of the church, Please bear this in mind. The church in Vienna are doing as well as could be expected under the circumstances they very much need a minister settled among them If a suitable person could be found to settle among them and live in their village and labor there and in Tuscola County he would have a wide and interesting field Their house of worship advances steadily, though slowly, the contractor is sick much of the time.

I have felt that I could not go to Vienna an other year but so urgent is the call that I have almost consented, Indeed were

there a sufficiency of labourers I should be glad to retire from the field, not that I dislike my work, I love it, neither am I superannuated being but 43 years of age, but because I cannot endure protracted study or confinement, before commencing study, which was at the age of 19, I had a very strong constitution and enjoyed uniform good health, but it entirely failed twice during my studies, and now I am almost a "human ruin, remnant of myself" Oh that the Lord would raise up competent labourers and send them forth into his field! It pains me to see so much work neglected that need to be done and done now; may I be enabled to give myself to the Lord to be used for his glory in the way it will be the best promoted.

Agreeably to your request I would say the amount now due me from your society is \$50, (Fifty Dollars) which please remit and oblige yours fraternally

A. B. Pratt

ERIE PRINCE

One of the more colorful and versatile missionaries to labor in Michigan in territorial days was the Rev. Erie Prince. According to his own statement he came to Michigan Territory in 1826. His first work was probably performed with the Monroe Presbyterian Church, but very shortly thereafter he came to the Presbyterian Church in Farmington. He made his home in that settlement, but at various times he served the churches in Nankin, Pekin, Bloomfield (now Birmingham), Plymouth and Wing Lake.

Prince, whose first name has some times been shortened to "Eri", did not confine his activities to the missionary field. He was also a business man, with a particular interest in developing water power. In fact, on one of his trips further into the interior of the territory, he became interested in the rapids at Okemus, where the Indian chief of that name had his settlement astride the Red Cedar River. Seeing the "white water," as the Indians called it, indicating a rapid descent of the river at that point, the Rev. Mr. Prince hurried back to the Land Office at Detroit and entered in his name the section of land through which flowed that part of the Red Cedar River.

Prince actually built a saw mill on one of the tributaries of the Rouge River in Farmington Township. He served the township as its supervisor for the years 1842, 1843 and 1844.

One of the early settlers of Farmington said of the Rev. Erie Prince that he was "a man of great dignity, and I think was regarded as a man of greater preaching ability than Mr. Ruggles, but no better man." Several of the Rev. Isaac Ruggles letters appear later.

It would appear from the report of his successor at Farmington, the Rev. Ansel Bridgman, who replaced him in the Fall of 1830, that Prince had some difficulties with some of the members of his congregation and abandoned the church there, but continued with the church at Plymouth. It was after this time that Prince served the

churches of Nankin and Pekin, just over the line in Wayne County.

From the Prince letters here reproduced we can conclude that the Rev. Erie Prince was a sincere and energetic missionary. The first letter bears the rare territorial postmark of Farmington; the second, although also written at Farmington, was mailed from the Bloomfield post office, which later became the Birmingham office.

Farmington Oakland Co. Michigan Oct. 4,
1827

Dear Sir:

Since my last, the labours of your missionary have been very fatiguing I have been called upon, in almost all directions, to the distance of 12 or 15 miles, to attend on funeral occasions. These & other parochial duties, which are inseparable to the settlement of a new country, are daily increasing. It is impossible, for me, to describe to you the situation of this country in a moral point of view, or the difficulties, which a minister of the Gospel, is necessitated to encounter or else be of no use to the people or leave them destitute. When all is said that can be said, you will only have the picture & not the image.

In this immediate vicinity, I am sensible that there is an increase of good feeling on the subjects of morality & religion. The Sabbath is more & more regarded; people attend public worship more generally & appear to give better attention.

I have now been in the Territory one year, & my expectations are more than answered. When I first landed at Detroit there was only two ministers of our order in the Territory, there is now (if I call myself one) six. Rev. Wells at Detroit, Page at Ann arbour, Rugels (Ruggles) at Pontiac; Morse (?) at Monroe, Darwine (Darwin) at Tecumseh. These places are County seats, & all dependant except Detroit, on the christian public for assistance to support their ministers. But three years since & Detroit was unable to support a minister of our order, they now give Mr W a good support. I look forward three years, to the extent, & each of these places which I have mentioned, will be able to support a minister of themselves, & in addition to this, have in actual operation all the religious societies, which are common to eastern villages. The little

which our christian friends bestow upon us, I trust will enable us to make a good beginning, without it, the people could have no ministers to begin with & therefore, most assuredly soon get into a state of feeling, that would render it much more difficult to establish the preaching of the Gospel among them at any future period.

It appears to be the wish of the people that I should continue with them. That this should be, they solicit the continuance of your patronage. You will recollect that I have been in this place only six months. At the commencement of my labours, the people thought that they should be able to pay me in the productions of their farms, \$125 whether they will be able to do this or not, I cannot tell, they have as yet paid me only about \$15. This grain & labour with my expenses out have been \$400 in money. With this I have procured me a few missionary comforts so that my expenses in future will not be so much. Without your assistance it will be impossible for me & my little family to subsist, but if you should see fit to give me a mission for 3 or 4 months I feel as though it would be my duty to continue here, & I believe that I can do it cheerfully.

Yours affectionately

Rev. A. Peters.

Erie Prince

N B I have given Mr. Hastings an order on you for the last year.

(Then follows Mr. Hasting's letter)

Sir

An impression prevails in this region that it is the wish of your Board of Managers that applications should be made through some person having a personal acquaintance with some of its members. As I am personally acquainted with Mr. Knowles Taylor--Mr. Prince has desired me to write in behalf of his application---I have but a slight personal acquaintance with Mr. Prince and can only say that he is reputed to be an active & persevering man & a faithful & pungent preacher & one in whom the people are well united. Farmington has been but recently settled and may not be so soon able to support a clergyman without foreign aid as some other places. There are however a few valuable men in the Society and the tide of Emigration flows in that direction---The people were exceedingly immoral previous to Mr. P's location among them

& there has been I am informed a visible change for the better. Mr. P. seems willing to devote himself to the work & to content himself with a bare subsistence--I cannot therefore but hope the aid may be rendered--It is his wish to receive an appointment for one year with an allowance from your Society of 3 or 4 months salary at the rate of 400\$ per year.

A Society has recently been organized in this place for the purpose of aiding public Congregations---Our first object will be to secure for each (while lands can be obtained at the present price) a sufficient quantity for the use of the Pastor--It is thought that the aid thus given would be more permanent and render the Societies the better able to support a Clergyman. It was our intention to have become Auxiliary to yours--but in the hurry of business it was neglected. At our next meeting (which will be in Feb'y next) it will probably be done--In order to effect our object we shall need assistance by way of loans for a few years---applications will hereafter (be) made by the proper Officers. I am Dr Sir with respect yours

E. P. Hastings

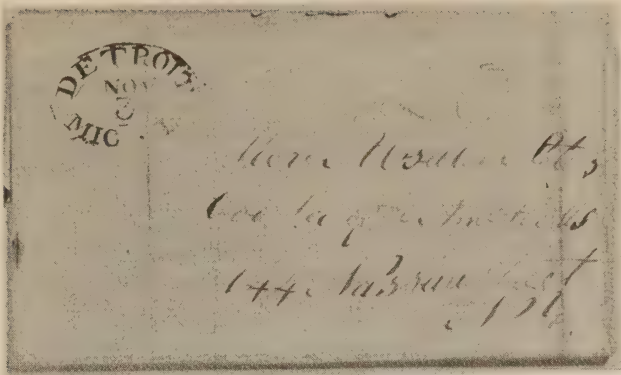
Detroit 5 Oct. 1827

* * * * *

Farmington, Oakland Co
Michigan Ter Oct, 1828

Dear Sir,

When I last reported to your Committee I did hope, and as I thought not without some favourable appearances, that before this we should have been blessed with the out-pourings of Gods Holy Spirit. But he has been pleased to pass us by, and leave the church to slumber on. To relate difficulties in the church, is what I have no pleasure in, but, at this time, as a duty, I mention that something like a year since, two of our oldest & leading members in the church were at variance. Every necessary Gospel measure was taken to bring the matter to a happy issue, which was a humble confession from one to the other & to the church & congregation. From this time, till within a few weeks, there has been an increase of friendly & Christian feeling, among the members of the church. And at times I have been ready to say, that the Lord will bless us. But at present things look dark, these two brethren are again



at variance. O pray for us, that all things may be done with christian prudence & wisdom.

Notwithstanding difficulties, it is a principle with me to ever be making occasions to do good. We have just purchased between 3,000 & 4,000 pages of tracts, to distribute through the town. Such a thing has never been done in this place. It is my belief, that it will be attended with a happy effect. Two have been added to the church by letter, one of whom was an Elder, & we have chosen him to the same office in our church.

If you recollect, I entered this field of missionary labour, when the time of six months of my commission at Monroe on the River Raisin was spent there. Of course I commenced my labours in this place in the middle of a commission year. The good people, (for their is no regular society) agreed to pay me a specified sum if I would labour with them for one year. I agreed to, if your Society saw fit to continue their assistance after my commission ended. At the close of the year, which was the 1st of last April, the people had another meeting & voted, (as they informed me,) unanimously to request me to continue with them another year, & they would raise all they could for my support, they would make thorough work of it. They signed \$180 to be paid in grain. I am satisfied that this sum is all the people are able to pay. At the meeting there was an understanding that I could not continue with them unless assisted by the Missionary Society. From these circumstances I request your Committee if they think proper to grant me a commission of \$100 to labour twelve months in this place, as a

Gospel minister. This will only support my little family with the most rigid economy.

Yours affectionately

Erie Prince

* * * * *

Farmington March 30 1830

Rev & Dear Sir,

I trust, that I feel grateful in some measure, as I ought, for your kindness in forwarding me a Commission. In my last, I think I mentioned to you, that there were some appearances of a work of Grace in this place, one or two were serious. Since that time, there has been about 30 hopeful conversions, some number more than 40 the day of judgment will tell. Time will not permit to give particulars, were it proper. I mention a sample & leave you to judge. When I was convinced that several were anxious to know what they should do to be saved, I appointed a meeting for free conversation on the subject of religion. It was a solemn interesting meeting, every professor of religion had something to say & some of the impenitent requested an interest in our prayers. I appointed another, in one week; but before this, the Methodist rushed in & had what I considered a disorderly meeting, 4 or more praying, singing & exhorting at once spitting their hands, & some one thing & some another. Nine, as the story goes, experienced religion before 2 o'clock in the morning. This meeting was 3 miles from me, & the evening before mine was appointed; but such was the effect that the new converts & the anxious & nearly all the people thought that the more noise & confusion, the more religion & the less danger of being deceived. I opened my meeting as I thought proper. Two, soon came & whispered in my ears to know if I was willing a seat should be placed in the middle of the room for those who wished to be prayed for to kneel over; it was no time to object, The Methodists & their exhorters were present. Ten or 15 soon bowed to the seat. I made some remarks respecting ---- & lead in prayer, know sooner had I closed than another was praying & in a few moments, 3 or 4 were praying, as many singing, 6 or 8 tapping & some endeavouring to persuade the impenitent to bow to the seat as a sure sign they would get religion. In one instance, I saw 2 men, one at each shoulder of another to pull

him down to the seat. Such was the state of things, that I slept one side & looked on for 2 or 3 hours until 5 arose from the seat & said they had experienced religion, & according to custom went immediately to praying for & instructing others. As soon as I could put in a word, I called the meeting to order & closed with prayer, & appointed two other meetings on the same evenings that the Methodists had appointments in the neighbourhood. Stating that I did not wish to interfere in the least with their meetings but wished, by all means, to have them keep them up, the next Sabbath I endeavoured to preach the Gospel to them & impress upon the mind the danger of being deceived respecting their hopes, & likewise read & remarked on the 14 Chap of the 1st of Cor. One of the members came to me on the Sabbath & requested me to withdraw my appointments for he was confident that all of the new converts & anxious would go to the Methodist meetings. I did so. But my preaching, or something else, in the hands of God, was the means of putting some to thinking & likewise of producing more order, except in the real Methodists. The work is now subsiding. I am confident, it is the work of God, some give evidence of a real change of heart, 12 have gone to the Methodists on six months probation, where the others will go, God only knows, they begin to think for themselves, the Methodists are willing to think & act for them. A few of us exhort them to search the Scriptures and I feel confident that in a suitable time the better & more stable part will be of our order. The work in Plymouth the little new church, which I mentioned as having formed in my last, is spreading but in a still small voice, only two indulge a hope, six anxious & some searious. I wish nothing said about this for everything is now on the (?), & I have no wish to speak of the Methodist only to my friends. I think religion is indispensable for admittance to heaven, but not a (word torn out). As respects your inquiry about "a minister with what more than ordinary promise?". It is probable that you know that Brother Page has left An Arbour. I saw, a few days since, one of the elders of that church he said it was very doubtful whether he returned, it was not generally expected he would. When he left he told them if they would do so & so he would return in the spring. The elder thought they would not as a society answer Mr. Page's request. There is nothing certain about it. If Brother P. should not return An Arbour is the very place for the man & he must come without any ifs or ands, trusting in God. I do not know of any other place where a man could have any incouragement of anything shaped like support, places enough, if he can preach for nothing & find himself. Perhaps the work of Grace in Farmington

will open the door for him, & all things considered have me leave. The opposition (?) has made a great change, some who have ever been for me are now against me. I hope if he is a man of God he will come, send him to me with his wife & the Lord will appoint him his place in our new vineyard. I give an order on you for 4\$ to pay for the Home Missionary \$1 for mine the other for S. Walker Farmington. Yours in love as a son loveth a father.

Erie Prince

* * * * *

Farmington, Sept. 14, 1831.

Rev. Absalom Peters,
Cor. Sec. A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir,

Since my last report, I have continued my labours in Pekin as directed in my Commission. The sabbath school continues prosperous; & the prospects of temperance & good order & church as favorable as could under all circumstances be expected. Some good people have moved into the place. In Nan-kin I continued my labours about four months, when a minister came among them & took my place. The change in this place, is truly great, nine months since, a minister of our order had

Whampoa, China 25
Sept 19th
Rev. Absalom Peters
Cor. Sec. A. H. M. S.
Brooklyn N.Y.

never preached there, now they have, I trust, a faithful one of the New Testament among them. Since my labours have closed at Nankin I have laboured in West Farmington, a place where the people were anxious that I should preach when I was engaged at Nankin. The settlement of this township commenced last autumn. The people now hold reading meetings every Sabbath when I do not preach with them. They have requested Mr. Hastings & Wells that my labours be continued with them.

I have now been in this T, five years & never have had my heart cheered with a prospect of a change for the better so much as at the present. I have more calls to preach than ever I had & many things appear to me as though God was about to pour out his Spirit here. We have had several interesting Church conferences & have appointed a four days meeting. Christians begin to be awake to the subject of prayer, & sinners serious. This state of feeling does not appear to be confined to any particular place, but so far as I know all over this part of the T.

Affectionately yours,

Erie Prince.

* * * * *

Farmington Oct 2 1832

Dear Sir,

Agreeable to one of the terms of my Commission, I proceed to render to you a succinct report of my labours. I am confident that you want nothing, but what is to the point. Since my return from Philadelphia, I have laboured as your missionary one half of the time in Plymouth. There is in this place nothing particularly interesting except the Sabbath Schools these with the assistance of Mr Shansen the agent of the A. S. U. have been revived, & with their new libraries are more flourishing than ever before. The other portion of my time I have laboured in a new place called Novi 12 miles north of west from me. There I have formed a Sabbath School & 3 weeks from last Sabbath, is the day appointed for forming a church. There is in this place considerable seriousness. 2 hopeful conversions. Were it not for H. M. S. this & many other places would have no preaching of our order. If this

church should be formed as anticipated it will make 3 that
your missionary has picked up within a year.

Affectionately yours Erie Prince

Missionary at Farmington & vicinity

ROBERT ROBINSON

The church at Dexter was first organized as a Presbyterian church. It soon became the Dexter Congregational Church, however, and such was its designation when it was served by the Rev. Robert Robinson.

One may gather from the contents of his letter that this was the first charge of this reverend gentleman. It may have been his last, as well, as far as Michigan is concerned, as we do not meet him again in our study of early Michigan churches. It is true that not all of the men sent into the area remained here. Many of them, probably most of them, did remain, and made great contributions to the development of the state and its religious and cultural life.

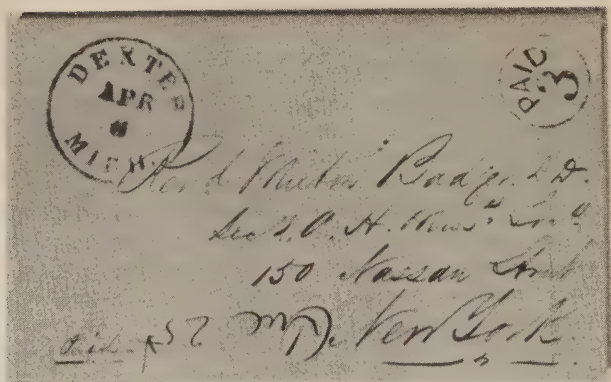
This letter was mailed from the Dexter office. It bears the circular townmark of that post office, with an attractive "Paid 3" in circle, both struck in black.

Dexter, Michigan 1st April 1853.

My Dear Sir

My report for the quarter ending this date is in so far as statistics are concerned almost a repetition of that sent you on 1st March. during the quarter, we have had three additions to our membership by letter from another church & we have dismissed three members to other churches. Our number is therefore just what it was at the beginning of the year, viz 60. There is I think some increase in our regular congregations & there is a decided improvement in our prayer Meetings. They grow larger & more interesting.

The Bible Class for adults which I hold every sabbath evening draws out several heads of families & is very pleasant I trust somewhat profitable. On the first Monday of each Month we hold a Monthly concert for prayer on behalf of Missions. As yet I do not know the spirit of my people in the matter of liberality. Am in truth just beginning to study society in its Michigan phases. I find that the great stumbling block in the way of the Gospel here lies in the contentions & other inconsistencies of professors. The young here are far off. May they be brought to look at the truth by the improvement of



Christians & brought nigh to God by the blood of his son. Our Sabbath School has lost its Superintendent & in him the Church has lost an active & consistant Deacon he has moved to Detroit. The Sabbath School keeps small but I trust that as the season advances the little ones will be better disposed & better able to attend.

The loss of our deacon is a severe blow & now the question with us all is who will fill his place--Yet the church has paid me its proportion of my salary for the quarter & has presented to me a call to become settled as its pastor. May I request that the amount of your grant for the quarter ending this date say Twenty five dollars (\$25) be remitted at your earliest convenience.

Hoping that this report may be satisfactory & with prayer that in my next I may have to inform you of conversions to Christ

I am Dear Sir

Ever truly yours

Robt Robinson

Rev'd Milton Badger D.D.

Sec'y A. H. M. Socy

New York

Outside of the settlements along the Great Lakes, as at Detroit, Monroe, Mackinac, St. Joseph and the Sault, one of the first villages to be established in what is now the state of Michigan was that of Pontiac. In fact, except for Niles, Pontiac was probably the first town to be established inland and away from the Lakes. Although Monroe and Mount Clemens are not actually on the Great Lakes, they were accessible to lake navigation by way of the Raisin and Clinton Rivers respectively.

Colonel Stephen Mack is credited with having been the founder of Pontiac. He was a member of the Pontiac Company, organized by several Detroit business men, with one or two from neighboring Mount Clemens. The company was organized for the express purpose of laying out a town on the Clinton River "where it is crossed by the Saginaw Trail," the forest path used by the Indians as they travelled from Detroit to Saginaw in the early days of Michigan. Early in 1819 Oakland County, named after the "oak openings" which were prevalent there, was established by a proclamation of Territorial Governor Lewis Cass. On May of the following year, 1820, a post office was established at Pontiac.

The first Baptist Church in Michigan was organized in Pontiac in 1822. Before the end of that decade the Presbyterians of the community were organized as The First Presbyterian Society, with Isaac Ruggles as the minister.

Ruggles, or "Father" Ruggles as he was affectionately known both by his parishioners and fellow citizens, was a graduate of the divinity school of Yale University. He was a native of Connecticut and was actually a Congregationalist by denomination, but worked equally well with Presbyterians as with those of his own denomination. A fellow minister, many years later, describes Ruggles as a "man humble and unprepossessing in his appearance, of no rare gifts or extensive learning, but simple and self-denying in his habits, and thoroughly in earnest in his purpose of doing good."

Isaac Ruggles, besides serving the Presbyterian Society of Pontiac, did some preaching in Farmington, and was responsible for the organization of the Presbyterian Church in that community. He preached at Wing Lake, and later organized the Congregational churches at Pontiac, Rochester and Romeo. In fact, when the Congregational church in Pontiac was organized by him, his wife and several other members of the Presbyterian church transferred their membership to the new church.

In later years Ruggles maintained his home in Pontiac. He was interested in growing fruit, and in the early 1850s entered exhibits of apples, pears and quince in the annual horticultural exhibit in Detroit, which was the forerunner of the Michigan State Fair, and in the Oakland County fair, winning some prizes. He died in 1857.

We show here several letters, or reports, written by Ruggles, or which refer to him and his work. The "O. Chamberlin" mentioned in one or two of the letters was Dr. Olmsted Chamberlin, a native of Vermont, who came to Pontiac around 1820, where he became a prominent business man. He served as postmaster for several years. The "G. Whittemore" mentioned was Gideon Whittemore, another prominent business man, and at one time probate judge of the county. He later served as Secretary of State, from 1846 to 1848. Both were active parishioners in the Presbyterian church.

The first five of the letters shown bear the very rare territorial postmark of the Pontiac post office, all in manuscript. The first one is franked with the signature of postmaster Chamberlin, thus saving postage, as at that period of our postal history mail from or to a postmaster required no postage, on either business or personal letters.

The postscript added to the last letter, in which the Rev. Albert Worthington pleads his cause, is really pathetic, and graphically shows the sacrifices made by these early missionaries in carrying on their work. Later,

under his own name, we reproduce a long letter written by this same gentleman while he was serving in territorial days in the Flat Rock area.

Rev. & dear Sir

We, the Presbyterian Society of Pontiac in the County of Oakland & Territory of Michigan acknowledge our obligations to the American Home Missionary Society for aid in support of a preacher of the Gospel. We would hereby express our gratitude for past favors. We consider the Rev. Mr. Ruggles a faithful servant of the Lord--He is the man of our choice; & we desire to obtain him as our minister. We wish to afford him an adequate support, but the scarcity of money renders us unable to do all that we wish to do.

We therefore respectfully solicit a continuance of your charity.

We make our request as a society & not as a church, by reason of our peculiar circumstances. There are no male members of the church in Pontiac, & only five or six within six miles. As we are anxious that Mr. Ruggles should labor more constantly at Pontiac than hitherto, we are willing to make all reasonable efforts for the purpose.

By your benevolent aid, we think we shall be able to effect this--Should you think proper to renew Mr. Ruggles Commission, we shall consider ourselves much obliged, & shall feel encouraged to do what we can to support the ministry in our infant village where such means of good are greatly needed. We shall probably be able to raise by an auxilliary society, twenty five dollars, as an expression of our gratitude & in our feeble manner, to lend our aid to advance the glorious cause of our common Lord.

We wish you prosperity.

Yours Respectfully,

Rev. Absalom Peters,
Pontiac, Feb'y 16th, 1828.
By order of the Society

G.O. Whittemore
Secretary

Olmsted Chamberlin,
Chairman

P.S. Please address your reply to O. Chamberlin
P.M. Pontiac.

At a meeting of the first Presbyterian society of Pontiac held at the village of Pontiac on the 12th day of July 1828. Deacon Jacob N. Voorhis was called to the Chair and Wm. F. Moseley was chosen Secretary.

By order of the Meeting a letter was read from Cor. Sec. of the American H. Miss. Society in New York to O Chamberlain Esq dated June 5th 1828.

On motion it was ordered that the following article be adopted (viz.)

"We the subscribers hereby wish to be considered as members of the first Presbyterian Society in Pontiac and to progress in such course as shall best conduce to its advancement."

On motion ordered that a committee of three be appointed to circulate the foregoing Article and the following persons to wit Jacob N. Voorhis Isaac Voorhis & Judah Church were appointed--

On motion ordered that said committee notify the members of the Society of the time & place of the next meeting--

Meeting adjourned to Saturday the 19th July 4 O C P M.

Saturday July 19th 1828

Society met according to adjt-- Committee returned the names of forty two persons who had signed the foregoing article.

On motion ordered that the votes be taken by division of the house. It was moved and seconded that Rev. Isaac W. Ruggles be the minister to said Society for the ensuing year. Motion carried in the affirmative--

On motion ordered that this meeting be adjourned to the 30th day of August next--

Signed

Jacob N. Voorhis
Chairman

Wm F. Moseley
Secy

I certify the foregoing to be a true statement of the proceedings at the several meetings of the first Presbyterian Society of Pontiac, M.T.

Wm F. Moseley
Secretary

Here with I transmit the proceedings of our Society meeting in conformity with your letter of 5 June last, & humbly beg your aid in supporting the Rev. I.W.Ruggles as our minister at Pontiac.

Very respectfully yours
O. Chamberlin P.M.

A. Peters, Esq. Cor. Sec. A.H.M.

* * * * *

Pontiac, Oct. 27--1829

Reverend & dear Sir--

Since my last, I have been laboring in the same round of duties as before. Being blessed with health, I am able in some good measure to perform the labor which my duties require. Within the circuit of my travels there is, generally speaking, a good attention to the means of grace. On the Sabbath, I am accustomed to preach three times, sometimes four including the evening. On week days I preach more seldom than I should wish. The circumstances of the people are, generally, such as renders it inconvenient to attend & therefore not expedient to make appointments on week days. In my visitations, however, from house to house, on week days, I endeavor to supply what I lack in preaching, endeavoring to recommend the religion of Jesus, to persuade saints & sinners to do their duty, & to prepare to meet their God. The people treat me kindly, & disposed to treat ministers with due respect.

I mentioned 4 places at which I preach alternately. At all those places, they now hold reading meetings, when they have not preaching. At Washington, one place of my preaching, 3 have been received into the church, since I wrote; one by certificate, & two by profession. I have also dispensed the Lord's Supper there. Certain individuals among them are, I think, under serious impressions; & I hope to be able, on a future occasion, to say something which may minister to your joy, & that of all who love souls.

The people, generally, on my circuit wish to encourage religious order, & seem to feel thankful for your munificence; but feel unable, at present, to contribute any thing except for the maintenance of the Gospel in their own neighborhood. But I think there is a fair prospect that before many years have elapsed, the people in this Territory will be as well able, & I hope, as well disposed, to promote the object of your benevolent Society, as any other part of the Union. You have the prayers of the Lord's people here; we ask yours, for us.

I am your affectionate brother
& humble servant, -Isaac W. Ruggles

Reverend A. Peters

* * * * *

*Received of
Isaac W. Ruggles
8 May 1850
Rev. Abner Peters
Cor. cl. N. York
124 Nassau St. New York*

Reverend & Dear Sir,

Three months since, I intimated that a work of grace was hopefully begun among the people at Washington, where I labor one fourth of the time. I have the pleasure to inform you, that for 3 or 4 weeks the good work continued gradually to progress. There appeared to be a general thoughtfulness among the people; some were anxiously enquiring, & the friends of Zion were cheered with flattering expectations. Ten or 12, we hope, have found the pearl of great price.

But I must tell you also, sorrowing, that this good work has been prevented in its progress, as I suppose, by the wickedness of some, & the imprudence of others. A man here, who not long since, had been excommunicated from the Methodist class, has, to appearances, caused the evil which we deplore. His animosity towards the Methodists seems to be implacable. Thro his instigation a party has been raised up to oppose the Methodists. This has had the effect to destroy the pleasing harmony which before subsisted between the two denominations; & by this means & some other evils concurring the enemy of souls has got the advantage.

“The Spirit, like a peaceful dove,
Flies from the realms of noise & strife.”

Since my last I have dispensed the Lord's Supper once at this place; at which time 2 were received into fellowship with the church; one by certificate & one by profession. One stands propounded for admission.

But of this people you will learn something more, perhaps in my next.

The Lord's people at Rochester are persevering in the duty of meeting together statedly, to read & sing & pray, as I told you before. They have recently formed a Tract Society, in which they have been favored with a more general co-operation of the people than was expected.

At Monson's Settlement, also, they meet on the Sabbath, when they have preaching & when they have none. Good is done them by means of a Tract Society. The Tracts are used as a kind of circulating library. They are deposited at the place of meeting for worship, & are drawn out one Sabbath & returned the next. I think this is evidence that the vius (views) of a few individuals have already been, in a measure, reformed already, & some serious impressions made.

At Wing's Lake where I preach one fourth of the time, there is a good attendance on the means. The universalists have attempted to molest them, & to propagate their lies; but I am happy to state, that a majority of the people, even those who are not professors, are decidedly in opposition to this delusion. The time is probably not far distant when it will be thought expedient to institute a church there.

Our County Bible Society met yesterday, & resolved to supply with Bibles, all the destitute in the County within one year from next May.

We greatly rejoice to hear that your Society prospers; that by it great good is effected in the cause of Zion.

May you be prospered more & more.

Dear Brother pray for us.

I am your humble servant,

I. W. Ruggles

Rev. A. Peters

* * * * *

Pontiac, Ap. 17--1830

Rev. Absalom Peters.--

Dear Sir, Since my last all things in my field have remained much as they were.

At Washington, I have dispensed the Lord's Supper once, which makes three times since the church was organized. One has been added to the church by profession, which makes 4 by profession since the chh. was instituted. Two, as I before told you, were received by letter. All put together make 12 now in the church. Two of these, we suppose, have experienced religion within 5 months past. There are others who were the subjects of the revival before mentioned, that are expected to unite with this chh. The church congregation in this place, at the last time I was with them, resolved unanimously that thanks be rendered to the A.H.M. Society for having sent them a minister, & aided in his support. They also unanimously request that their aid may be continued in support of the same minister.

The congregations in the 3 other places where I have labored, have, also, voted thanks to the Society for their munificence & request the continuance.

I have conversed with Bro. Wells & Mr. Hastings. They tell me that you give encouragement that more laborers shall be sent over to help us. By so doing, you will much oblige us. You are well persuaded I suppose, that the field in which I labor is large enough for 2 or 3 laborers. The places I preach alternately, are, you recollect, Washington, (Hoxies) Rochester, Munson's Settlement, & Wing Lake. I will present you a view of their relative situation. (Map) You will perceive from this draft that from W. Lake to Washington, the two extremes of my field, is 29 miles.

Washington (Boxing) Point to
 Wing Lake. I will present
 relative situation.
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Rev. A. Peters

But there is yet much land to be possessed. Mount Clem-
 ens, the county seat of Macomb County, & other settlements in
 that county have been hitherto unoccupied by ministers of our
 own persuasion. If more missionaries are sent, I think the
 field may be extended, advantageously. If devoted men, men
 who are moved to the work by their love to souls, are sent
 here, they will find enough to do. The people here treat min-
 isters with kindness & respect; & a faithful laborer need not
 fear that the people will let him be in want of a comfortable
 maintenance.---Brother Wells & Mr. Hastings will communi-
 cate advice to you with respect to the stations best for me to
 occupy, should you send others, & think proper also to reap-
 point me. I have written my report for the year, as I am in-
 structed, & have directed it to Rev. Mr. Gould of Southampton.
 --The cause of temperance in our County is prospering, be-
 yond what we could expect. There is probably not half the liq-
 uid poison drank that was drank a year ago.

Mr. Prince informs me, that you speak of a young man who
 would be willing to come & settle in this Territory. He has
 told you, I suppose, how he & the people of Farmington stand
 affected toward each other. He, I think, can be no longer use-
 ful there. They are desiring to have some one settle with them.
 I think it would be a suitable place for the one whom you men-
 tioned to him.

An extraordinary work of grace is progressing at Farmington. More than 40, we hope, already been born of the Spirit. It is, indeed, a time of great joy with all who love the Lord.

We are earnestly praying that the good work may spread & prevail throughout the Territory.

That you, dear Brother, & your truly benevolent Society, may be prospered by God, is the sincere prayer of your unworthy & humble servant,

Rev. A. Peters.

I.W.Ruggles.

LUTHER SHAW

One of the earliest missionaries to come to Michigan territory was the Rev. Luther Shaw. Following the organization of the Congregational churches at Romeo and Rochester by the Rev. Isaac Ruggles, Mr. Shaw took over the responsibility of serving those congregations. Three of his reports, together with requests for aid for some of the churches, give us some insight as to the problems confronting not only the pioneer preachers, but the members of their congregations as well.

All three of these are territorial letters, the first and third communications bearing the rare territorial town-mark of Romeo. In fact, the first letter is franked by the postmaster, Gideon Gates, who was apparently a member of the congregation served by the Rev. Mr. Shaw. The second letter, although date-lined at Romeo, was mailed from the Detroit post office.

William Burbank, who writes on behalf of the Rochester church, was a prominent official from the earliest days of Oakland County, helping in the organization of that county, and serving on several important territorial committees. He was one of the officers of the ill-fated Clinton and Kalamazoo Canal Company.

Gad Chamberlin, of the Romeo church, was one of the seven charter members of that church. N. T. Taylor signed for the Romeo church in both the first and the third letters.

With such leaders of the community taking an active part in the welfare of the local church the hand of the missionary was greatly strengthened in his work.

Rochester Oakland Co. M.T.
Nov. 21, 1831

Rev. and Dear Sir

The churches of Romeo and Rochester anxious that the labour of your Missionary the Rev. Luther Shaw should be

continued to them and sensible that the amount he receives from the people (say two hundred dollars) is insufficient for his support--appeal to the Home Missionary Society for a continuance of its bounty. Mr. Shaw at our earnest solicitation came to labour with us in February last. He has been enabled to do good, and we wish him to remain with us. What we now desire is, that, Mr. Shaw may be further commissioned for four & half months to complete his year, at the expiration of which a hope is entertained that such an arrangement will be made as will secure to one or the other of the places his undivided ministrations. Mr. Shaw found our chhs few feeble and languid and we are still feeble, but there is an increase attention to the means of grace and particularly the preaching of the Gospel. Our assembly's at Rochester though few are attentive and solemn, Five young men and women were added to the church in Rochester two weeks since which day was one of intense interest, two or three others are hoping that they passed from death unto life and it is expected they will offer them to the chh soon. We have abundant cause of Gratitude to the Great Head of the chh and it is hoped that the A.M.S. will be remembered with thankfulness--We pray you to remember us in our weak estate and suffer us still to lean upon you & upon a portion of your bounty.

We are sir respectfully

Your servants Wm Burbank) in
) behalf
) of
) Roch.
 Chch

- - - - -

Romeo Nov 25. 1831

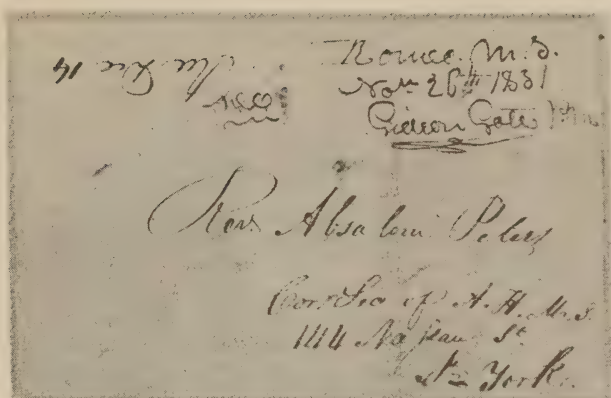
The Church at this place concur in the foregoing request of Wm Burbank in behalf of the Church at Rochester ---

Respectfully yours

N.T.Taylor
 Gad Chamberlin

Trustees of the chh
 & Soc. Romeo

- - - - -



Romeo Macomb County
Michigan Nov 25. 1831

Cor. Sec. of the A.H.M.S.
144 Nassau St. N.Y.

Rev and dear sir.

At the request of the churches at Romeo & Rochester I occupy a part of this sheet. The Chh at Rochester numbered but 10 or 11 when I came here to labor. It has increased to 17.-- they are few and feeble & far from being wealthy. The chh at Romeo numbered 17 when I came:- now it consists of 25 members; a third of whom are male members. There is wealth enough in this place to support a Preacher of the Gospel, -but as I have remarked in a former communication, -there is so great diversity of religious sentiment that it will be found difficult at present to raise a sum sufficient. An effort will be made by both Chhs. as is hinted by Mr. Burbank, to secure my undivided labors at one place. It is tho't too that nearly as much will be contributed by one chh and Society, to enjoy the stated administrations of the Word as both will contribute to have preaching 1/2 the time. Now their wish is to ascertain whether the A.M.S. will grant them further aid--&, if \$200, or \$250. can be procured by either chh--the Soc'y will lend them assistance so your Missionary can be comfortable & free from embarrassment. If I were alone I could do in some respects different & perhaps be at less expense. But I have a family &, let us be as economical as we may, -it costs us something to live.

Rochester is an important place and it is highly desirable that there should be preaching all the while. The state of things at Romeo is quite different in some respects from what it is at Rochester. There is greater division--several different Denominations and if the ground should now be given up by the A.M.S. the prospect is dark indeed. The chh. and Society here feel grateful for what you have already done for them,--they have gained strength & courage--but should they now be deserted--deprived of a minister, they have reason to expect that the day is distant when they will again enjoy what they now enjoy. I may feel it duty to have both places--but I remain to be convinced.

May the benevolent who contribute of the substance to aid your Soc'y be rewarded a thousandfold here & hereafter with life eternal! Give my sincere thanks to the Ex. Com. of your Soc. for what they have done for me. The Lord reward them also.

Yours etc

Luther Shaw

* * * * *

Romeo Macomb County
Michigan Augt. 15, 1832

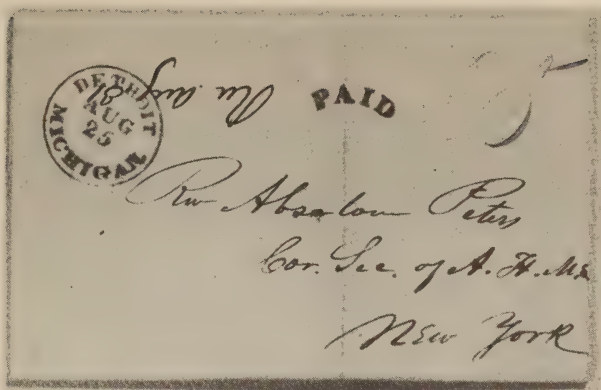
Rev & dear Sir

I have just rec'd a communication from E.P.Hastings Esq. informing me of the fact that the Ex. Com of the A.H.M.S. had forwarded him a Commission for me for a year commencing Feb. 15, 1832.

It seems a long time since I last reported--still I have nothing of special interest to communicate. We can sing of mercies in both places where I labor altho' we enjoy nothing which may be termed a Revival.

At our last Communion season, three were added to the church in Rochester by profession of faith. This Church has increased in number to double since my labors commenced here. Sabbath Schools in this place are flourishing.

At Romeo we have had a trying case of Church discipline. For some weeks--the attention of the church was almost whol-



ly absorbed with it. The censure was for theft & falsehood. The offender is suspended from the privileges of the church. The members were cautious & I hope, prayerful in their proceedings. I believe the members will love each other & be more tender towards each other now than before.

The Com. of Cor. in Detroit are not fully satisfied with the exertions of the two Chhs in raising a support for me. They have given me directions--& the result will soon be ascertained--at which time I intend to make a communication of greater length.

Yours as ever

L. Shaw

* * * * *

Romeo Macomb County
M.T. March 23. 1833.

Rev. & Beloved Br.

In my last Report, I stated that it was uncertain whether I should continue in Romeo or remove to some other part of the Territory. I now expect to remain here to preach $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time & $\frac{1}{4}$ in Ray--a town adjoining east. The sum raised for my support, others who will write on this sheet, may state. It

is my wish (should the Ex. Com. give me a commission for the above-named places) that it may be forwarded as soon as convenient; & if they should not, I should desire to know it soon.

Yours &

Luther Shaw

* * * * *

Rev. Chas. Hall,

Dear br.

In the last No. of the "H.M." a donation of \$6. is credited to this place. I made a deduction of \$6 in my draft on your Soc. payable to E. P. Hastings, \$5. of which I rec'd from this place & Rochester a year ago,--which sum was noticed in the H.M. at the time, & when I made a draft on the Soc. in Aug't last (the first I made the past year) for \$50. I forgot to deduct the \$5. contributed and noticed as above. In my Draft dated 15 Nov. 1832 I made the deduction of \$6--\$5. con. & \$1 to pay for 2d Vol "Verse Exposition." for which I gave direction in my Report for Nov. One copy of the "Exposition" I ordered for myself & 1 for Willard Guild. This statement may make the matter straight. Mr. Guild has not rec'd the Nos. of the Ex. He wishes to take the work. Mr. L. W. Gilbert of Romeo desires to take it from the beginning. Please send the back Nos. of 1 & 2 Vol. and if I should be commissioned by the A.H.M.S. I will pay for it out of the first Draft,--which will be in May. This request I make for two reasons. One is, money which is current in your state is extremely scarce here; another is, to save postage. Mr. G. wishes to take the work; he superintends the S.S. which pursues the Daily Verse System.

Truly yours

Luther Shaw

* * * * *

Romeo March 23. 1833

Dr Sir

The Rev. Mr Shaw, is now in this place; he expects to preach here $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time and in Ray, the Town adjoining, $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time. This Soc. have felt for some time that the occasional Services of a minister, was of but little avail, and being impressed with the importance of having the regular and constant ministration of the Word of God, they have made an effort to raise \$250. which, it is thought will be done, and being much attached to their pastor, (Mr. Shaw) they are desirous to retain him, hoping to see the work of the Lord go forward in this place. This place will, in about 3 or 4 yrs. be able to support a minister without any assistance from your Soc. but not short of that time. It is expected that an Academy will be erected here the present season, the second story to be reserved and finished off for the accomodation of the Congregational soc. There was a protracted meeting in this place in Nov. last which resulted as we then hoped in the conver. of about 20 souls, but there was no shepperd and the Lambs are scattered (we had a minister 1 day out of 14 only.)

Yours in the Lord

Rev. Absalom Peters)	(	Lyman W. Gilbert
	) I then resided at (
Cor. Sec'y the)	(
A.H.M.S.		Rochester 15 miles (
N.York		distant from Romeo(
		L. Shaw (

* * * * *

Romeo March 27, 1833

Dear Sir

Through the politeness of Rev. Mr Shaw I am allowed to address you a few lines in regard to our prospects, wants etc. as a moral & religious community. I came to this place about 4 years ago--there was then here no Church save a Methodist --but by great exertion on the part of the friends of the cause of Christ--assisted by the home Missionary Society they have been able to do much- but much remains to be done- the enemies of the cause are active- and shall we slumber? A few

of us are ready to answer no: but we must be hindered in our work unless we continue to receive assistance from the H.M. Society- we shall raise here & in Ray \$250- this year- which is twice as much as has been raised in one year before. We have full confidence therefore in the belief that if the benevolence of the Society is extended to us 3 or 4 years more - we shall then not only be able to support the Gospel among us-- but contribute our mite towards sending it to the other portions of our destitute country--

Respectfully yours-

Rev. A. Peters
N York

N. T. Taylor--Trustee
of Romeo Con Soc

Apl 6.

Mr. Guild has rec'd 2 Nos. of 2d vol of the Expositor. He is about to move to Romeo & wishes to have the future nos. of the Expositor sent to Romeo. Mr. L.W. Gilbert is a subscriber for the "Nat. Preacher," which is now directed to him Cananduagua N.Y. It is his wish to have the address altered for this place. Please speak to W. Dickinson.

(Unsigned but in Shaw's handwriting)

GEORGE N. SMITH

There can be little doubt but that the most prominent Congregational minister to work in Michigan in its early days was the Rev. John D. Pierce. He later became the state's first Superintendent of Public Instruction and has often been called the "Father of the public school system" of Michigan.

Pierce tells us that in 1837 he was called to Gun Plains, in Allegan County, for the purpose of ordaining the Rev. George N. Smith as a missionary to the Indians. The closing paragraph of the Rev. Smith's letter here reproduced tells of his plans to "enter an Indian Colony" as their missionary, so he probably terminated his services with the Gun Plains Church in the Fall of 1838. He served as a missionary to the Ottawa Indians, first in Allegan County and later in the Grand Traverse Bay area.

It will be noted that Smith's letter is dated at "Plainfield." This was the name of that township until changed by the Legislature in 1847 to "Gun Plains", after the Gun River which flows through the township. The Presbyterian Church of Plainfield was first organized in Smith's home in 1837. It was later attached to the Kalamazoo Presbytery and the name was changed to Gun Plains Presbyterian Church.

Elsewhere we reproduce another letter from the Gun Plains Church, written a dozen years later, this time from the Trustees and Elders, seeking aid in the support of the Rev. Robert McMath, sharing his services with the Congregational Church of Otsego.

The letter was mailed at Kalamazoo. There was no post office at Gun Plains but nearby Otsego had an office. It carries a strong strike of the circular townmark of Kalamazoo, in red.

Plainfield, July 2, 1838.

Rev. Milton Badger

Dear Brother

It is with a heart filled with gratitude to God that I now address you--The second year of my labors since the date of my commission is now closed. I had given up all hopes of receiving aid from your society--was in embarrassed circumstances, the church not having half borne my expenses when two days ago I rec'd a renewal of my commission--You can judge perhaps with what pleasure I rec'd it. How grateful I ought to be to my heavenly Father who has thus provided for me by the blessings of his goodness.

You knew the state of our society when we made our last request, with which I sent my quarterly report. The church have not been able to make up to me near the amount then pledged. I have notwithstanding continued to labor in Plainfield & Otsego until quite recently & I think my labors have not been wholly in vain. During the year that is past nine have been added to the church by letter -- four children have been baptized. All the ordinances of God's house have been enjoyed & they are attended upon with an interest which has never before been manifested.

A Sabbath school is in successful operation at Otsego. I obtained a small Library as a donation which is sufficient for their present use. There is also a Sabbath school in Plainfield with a small library. I report only for three fourth's of the year for the last three months I have preached here only a portion of the time. I therefore draw only for nine months on from the 1st of July 1837 to the first of April 1838. though I have spent a part of the last quarter among this people. The church now have meetings every Sabbath in the village of Otsego. They are sustaining a minister one half of the time by their own effort & there is a good prospect of their efforts being blessed--the field is an important one & it is very important that the means of grace are sustained & and I recommend the church to your favor if they should need & ask aid as they must if they attempt to sustain a minister the whole of the time.

I am now engaged as Agent of the Western Society of Michigan to benefit the Indians--next fall I expect to enter an Indian Colony as Missionary. We hope the time is at hand when a

great work is to be wrought among the natives of our forests,
their call is loud Come & help us & I consider it my duty to
hear and obey. Therefore I leave this people.

Yours in Christian bonds
Geo. N. Smith

Rev. Milton Badger

P.S. The reason I have not reported at the close of the 2
quarters past is I did not receive my commission till the
year closed or on the last day & did not suppose that reports
would be expected.

Yours, G.N.Smith

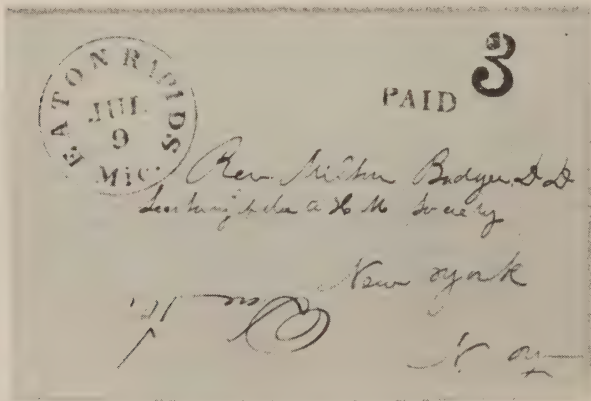
JOSEPH W. SMITH

The first mention we find of the Rev. Joseph W. Smith is in connection with a convention of Congregational ministers held in 1842 in Jackson. Smith attended that convention and at that time was the minister of the church at Grand Blanc.

The following year we find him at Eaton Rapids, where he organized the Congregational Church of Eaton Rapids, following a meeting of interested residents in his home. He was still the minister there in 1851, as appears from his interesting letter written in the summer of that year.

The reference to "Benton" is to the township of that name just to the northwest of Eaton Rapids, where the only town was Potterville. Most of these missionaries lost no opportunity to start new congregations in communities where a church might eventually be organized, and it would appear from his letter that the Rev. Joseph Smith was such a one.

This letter, mailed from Eaton Rapids, carries a very clear strike of the circular handstamp of that post office, with other interesting postal markings, all struck in black.



Dear Brother:

From some certain remarks which I have often heard made, I conclude that frequent additions to the chh is the precise & only criterion by which to judge of a ministers faithfulness & usefulness & hence it is sufficient to prove a man inefficient & useless, if he is not "building up" & yet let it be generally understood that when a man enters a field of labor that he goes there to build up his own particular denomination & that he would not remain there a moment longer than he has the prospect of building up a society of his own & perhaps that not one man in a hundred would consider him fit to preach the Gospel of Christ, & "forsaken" would soon be written his chh a place of meeting or if he sows & another reaps, the reaper must be one of his own denomination. A case of the kind has just occurred among us. We have a man here in Benton who has been recently reclaimed from a back-slidden state & erected the family altar & when I made a call upon the family soon after, the mother said to me, Mr. Smith, I believe that yours prayers have been answered, In you have prayed that this might become a praying house & such is now the case & yet this family with some others have united with the Methodists, I make not this remark, however, by way of complaint, But advert to it to show that it is one of the serious difficulties with which the Missionary at the West has to contend. He is in trouble let him take either horn of the dilemma, By one part he is condemned for not building up, by another he is condemned, if it is obvious to all that such is his object.

Again, I am aware that it is desirable that our chhs should be large & the addition of many sounds well abroad. But I can never encourage sinners to profess religion, where I have serious doubts concerning the piety of many of them, It is not unfrequently the case that a husband & wife if urged would both connect themselves with a chh, But the piety of one is very doubtful, Still if we will not take both we can not have either. Now it has appeared to me better to reject both, than with both take one when it is possible that one will do more injury than both will do good, Besides I have not been particularly in favor of what we call protracted meetings, the reaction is liable to be so chilling & disheartening. I can with pleasure see a rise in spirituality, but a declension is most sickening & trying.

I may however at some future day see the propriety of resorting to something of the kind. In my congregations are

quite full & interesting especially in Benton. At my last church service in that place, the audience was good & it was evident by the general good attention, feeling & renewed interest on the part of the chh that the Holy Spirit was present with us, I hope soon to report more cases of conversion, I preach a part of the time five miles South of this village (Eaton Rapids) where there is a good attention a most interesting Sabbath School, & on the whole I flatter myself that my prospects of usefulness never were better, I think I love the service of Christ & whatever may be the result of my present effort I hope I shall never become weary of it.

Yours in the bonds of the Gospel

J. W. Smith

The A.H.M. Society to J. W. Smith, Dr.
to three months Missionary labor in Benton at \$40, per year
\$10,

J. W. Smith

Eaton Rapids July 7, 1851

P. S. I need this small draft to meet a just demand now due, Mrs. Smith is just saying that our apparel is wearing out. Will you have have a few articles to spare me?

J. W. Smith

LE MOYNE S. SMITH

One of the more versatile missionaries who came to Michigan in the early days was the Rev. LeMoyne S. Smith. From available records it would appear that 1842 found him in Detroit, but it is not certain that this was his first time in Michigan. His letter setting forth the problem that confronted him in selecting the route for his trip to the Grand River Valley, makes interesting reading. His observations on the future of the area are quite prophetic.

Smith is credited with the establishment of the Ionia Presbyterian Church, in 1842. The following year he organized the Portland Congregational Church, and a year later, with assistance from one Rev. Wheeler, he organized the Lyons Presbyterian Church.

He moved to Ottawa County in 1846 and it was here that he demonstrated his versatility. He planted an apple and peach orchard, and later helped to organize the county horticultural society. He was also a man of considerable literary talent, and several poems from his pen remain as evidence of his writing abilities. One of his poems was written on his 66th birthday, in 1874, so he was a young man of 34 years when we first meet him in Detroit, in 1842.

In 1862 Smith turned his talents to editing and publishing, an important service in the formative years of the state. He founded a Republican newspaper which he called "The Grand Haven Union."

Smith's letter omits the usual salutation and starts right in with a statistical chart, giving certain data as to the three churches which he served, to wit; 1st Congregational Church of Lyons, 1st Congregational Church of Ionia, and the Congregational Church of Portland. The letter was mailed at the Kent post office, and bears the black townmark of that office.



22-

Rev. Charles Hall

150 Ave. par St.
New York.

Lyons P.O. Ionia Co., Mich. April 1, 1843

A Statistical Report

(After the data as to members, etc, this letter:)

My labors have been so diluted, and it was so late in the season before I could get things in anything like a regular train that we organized no Sabbath Schools last season. We shall endeavor to do what we can the coming season. For the same and other reasons I have had no Bible classes, and I do not know as I can have while I am situated as now. As to Temp. I am ashamed to say anything because I can say so little that is good. If I can get Dr. Lewal's large plates I will try to do more. I have lectured twice at least, and some good has been done. An agency is now at work which I hope may do something. I told you in a former communication of the bogus Washingtonianism here. That seems to be dropped, and 3 drunkards have lately called a meeting to operate on the principles of Total abstinence.

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I want now to comply with your request and my own feelings while I try to tell you something of the moral state and wants of this Grand River Valley.

The Valley of the Grand River embraces (say below Jackson Co), Shiawassee Co., with 2,500 inhabitants, Ingham 3000,

Clinton 2500, Eaton 3000, Ionia 2500, Barry, 1500, Kent, 3000, and Ottawa 1000. These 8 counties contain almost 19000 inhabitants, and nearly 5000 square miles. There are 14 or 16 churches, and 4 or 5 ministers, of our denomination, That is, one minister to about 4000 inhabitants, 1000 square miles and 5 churches.

This valley is the most important part of Michigan. It is the richest in agricultural and mineral capabilities, and destined to be the most thickly populated. Here are all the varieties of soil and timber. Timbered land, openings, and plains, agreeably interspersed. Here are salt, coal, iron ore, and pine timber in abundance, and an amount of water power for hydraulic purposes unequalled in the state, and exceeded probably by few sections in the western states, and yet very little is known about it. When I contemplated coming into this section last Spring, I inquired a long time whether I could get through with my buggy and family before I could find out, and yet I found no difficulty, with the exception of a few miles of timbered land that was quite passable. I was in doubt for some time whether I could come directly through from Pontiac about 100 miles, and whether I should not be obliged to go around by Ann Arbor, and Marshall and Bnch (Branch) Co. a distance of more than 200 miles. Now there is a stage route directly through from Detroit via Pontiac, to Grand Rapids making a saving of 35 or 40 miles.

Here are important villages springing up in all these Co's, that are now and destined to be centers of influence. Some of them have chhs now, and in others chhs. might be gathered. Members of our chhs are scattered all over this region and they are like sheep upon the mountains. Who will come and gather them? Left so long with no man to care for their souls some disgrace the cause, others join other churches, and others still endeavor to maintain a feeble light amid the darkness that surrounds them. I have already said that I have found 90 in the Co. of Ionia who have been members of our chhs. elsewhere, and it will be safe to say that there are 100 in the Co. If this proposition holds, and I know of no reason why it may not, there are 760 members; and as no Co. has been neglected longer than this, and as some have had more means of grace, it would be safe to say that there are 800 members of our chhs. in this valley. Assuming 25 as the average number in each church, there would be 350 or less than half gathered into churches. Just in this connexion there is a fact worth mentioning. I have found in this Co. 18 ladies members of our churches who have impenitent husbands.

Now, dear brethren, what shall be done for these thousands? Are there no young men or old who can come and assist in the great work? Where are the scores who come out from our Theological Seminaries every year? Are they ready to go out to their ends of the earth and preach the gospel, and endure hardship as good soldiers. Oh! if my voice could be heard by my brethren in the ministry and those who are preparing to enter it. I would cry "Come over and help us" until the sound should reach their hearts. I ask again What shall be done for these thousands? As I am now situated, I must go east 65 miles, or south 35, or west 45 for an exchange. I feel alone in the wilderness, and not since I have been in this Co. have I seen a minister of our denomination in my house. Besides, what I can do in this Co. all alone is just better than nothing. O that the Great Head of the Church would send help. I feel as if I must lessen the extent of my field, at the close of this current year. My health requires it, the cause requires it. When worn out with labor, I return home, and look at what there is to be done, and see how little I can do, how many calls there are for preaching that I cannot meet and see too that my study is neglected of necessity, I ask how can I live so. O that God and the Church would send help. When shall we arise and take possession of the land for God. ---On the eastern border of my field in Clinton Co. is a settlement of German Catholics, for whom I feel deeply anxious. There are some hundreds of them, and they are to some extent accessible to Christian effort. They are many of them disgusted with their priest, whom they consider immoral. If I had a supply of German books and tracts, I could send them all over that settlement. I design to make an application to the Am. Tr. Soc. for them, and also to pledge myself, that if they will furnish the books, we will put one into every family in this Co. that will receive it. I shall refer them to you.

Grand Rapids, Mar. 21. I have been here nearly 2 weeks, and God has been pouring down his Spt. in power. Scores have been hopefully converted and the work goes on. It is my prayer that it may ascend the River, and reach my own field. The harvest in this part of the valley seems to be ripe, but the laborers are so few, and the field so large, that one cannot gather it. Will you not, as the Agents of the Great Lord of the harvest, send forth laborers into this field. I do pray that God may take this work into his own hands, and cause this wilderness to bud and blossom as the rose.

The certificate below speaks for itself. It is given at the request of Bro. Ballard made in consequence of a letter rec'd

from you in answer to an application from the church for aid in his support.

Yours in the Gospel
L.M.S.Smith
Miss. for Ionia Co.

The undersigned, are acquainted with Rev. James Ballard, Pastor of the 1st Cong. Church of Grand Rapids, and believe him to be devoted to the work of the Ministry. So far as we understand his views from recent personal intercourse with him, we believe him not to be substantially erroneous on the subject of perfection. On two other points he differs from the Calvinistic view, viz. Native depravity, and the obligation of Christians to keep the 1st day of the week as the Christian Sabbath. We believe him to be an honest inquirer for truth, and the committee can judge on the subject of commissioning him as your Missionary. We have recently been laboring with him in a precious revival of religion now in progress in his own church, and the church of which one of us is Pastor.

H. E. Waring, Pastor of the Ref. D. Ch. of
Grand Rapids

L.M.S.Smith, Missionary from Ionia Co. Mich.

PHINEAS SMITH

One of the most pathetic appeals, and yet eloquent, comes from the pen of the Rev. Phineas Smith, from the Lenawee County settlement of Raisin. For obvious reasons we have deleted the name of the "youth without experience" who caused Mr. Smith trouble in the community.

Obadiah Rogers, mentioned in the letter, was born in Massachusetts and at the age of 40 came to Raisin Township in Lenawee County in 1831. He was a zealous Christian deacon and was largely instrumental in the organization of the Congregational Church at Raisin, and later with the erection of the church edifice.

Smith's son-in-law, referred to in the letter, was the Rev. Charles C. Taylor, rector of the Episcopalian Church at Ann Arbor. He was born in Rhode Island. He resigned the Ann Arbor pastorate in 1850 to accept the presidency of the newly-founded St. Marks College at Grand Rapids, an Episcopalian institution. By 1852 he was back at St. Andrews, in Ann Arbor, as the pastor. He died in Kalamazoo in 1855.

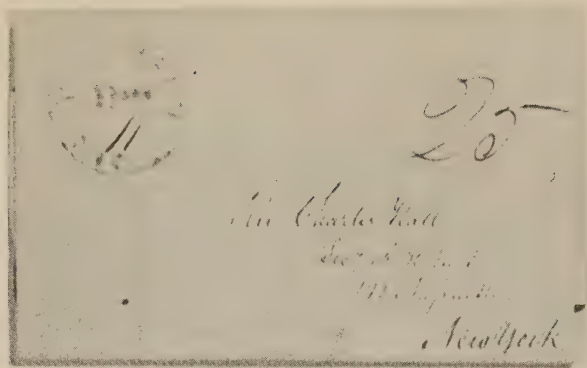
The interlineation and punctuation, the capitalization of letters, or lack of it, is exactly as it appears in the Rev. Smith's letter.

A note on the back of the letter, apparently placed there at the home office in New York, is short and cryptic. It is as follows:

"Asks explanations. Ans'd Ap. 18."

I wonder what the answer to such an earnest plea on the part of the Rev. Phineas Smith actually was!

Though date-lined at Raisin, the letter was posted at Tecumseh, and bears a rather blurred townmark of that office, struck in red.



Michigan, Lenawee, Raisin April 5, 1845

Rev. & Dear Brother

You will pardon I trust any violation of the rules of Syntax found in this hastily written letter. I think it my duty in the midst of the arduous business of packing furniture for removal to Ann Arbor to devote a few moments to writing. My subject is deeply interesting not only to myself, but also to my dear wife, my highly respectable children and numerous friends.

Although I have forwarded two letters to you, one of them written at least eighteen months ago, the other in Nov. last, both of which remain unanswered, still I hope that your character as a gentleman--your piety as a christian and christian minister will not suffer this to pass unnoticed.

Impressed as I have long been with the deepest veneration for those who have chiefly directed the Home Missionary enterprise--convinced that the organs of that benevolent association were guided in all their official acts by the purest desire for the glory of our Divine Master and the happiness of mankind, you will necessarily conclude that my feelings were wounded by the equivocal character of your letter of the 7th Ult. addressed to Obadiah Rogers & others of Raisin. That long delayed and very extraordinary communication, however intended, has greatly injured and afflicted not only myself but all those who sympathize with me.

We know that "affliction springeth not forth of the dust"--that one great design of chastizement is to work in us the

fruits of righteousness, still as a good name in the divine judgment is better than rubies, you will not blame me for humbly asking of you, a christian brother and a christian minister a frank explanation of the ambiguous language of your letter to O. Rogers etc. As a reason for the long delay of your letter you remark as follows "The application was not accompanied by any testimonials, either as to the claims of the congregation nor (or) as to the qualifications of Mr. Smith." "We were obliged to write to different quarters to obtain the information. As the result we have come to the conclusion that the appropriation asked is not expedient etc." Dear Brother, Permit me to inquire, is the above quotation or any part of your letter intended to disparage or implicate me or excite doubts of my christian character or ministerial qualifications? Have you received from any quarter intelligence prejudicial to my reputation and from whence? The tendency of your letter to O. Rogers & others, is, and its effect has been to lessen my usefulness in this community injure my good name and mar my happiness.

My son in law Rev. C.C.Taylor of the episcopal church Ann Arbor informed me that he called at the H.M. office, N.Y. in July last and enquired whether you would furnish means to assist me in removing to Michigan? Receiving a negative answer to this question he next asked whether in case I should remove west and labour for a feeble church you would afford missionary aid? To this question he received an affirmative answer. Encouraged by this assurance and the desire of doing good I have encountered the toil and sacrifice incident to a journey from the neighborhood of Boston. As I related, I think, in my last letter to you written on the same sheet with the application made by the church in Raisin, my removal to Michigan was effected with much difficulty & at an expenditure of one hundred dollars. Since my arrival I have preached in Tecumseh and Raisin every sabbath excepting two, and performed severe ministerial labour during the period of eight months. For this service I have received \$10.50 in money, \$37. in food and sundries, and a note of hand which is to be paid "after harvest" for \$44.00 making in the aggregate \$91.50. Rent & fuel being found me. The purchase of books and garments has been out of the question. The blessed gospel of the Son of God has been preach'd by me to the poor, "in season and out of season" and not without effect, and I will add without the least feeling of vanity, as in all other places where I have laboured, so here much to the acceptance of this people.

I have been employed by the W.A. of the A.H.M.S. a number of years. The very worthy Sec'y of that Agency Rev. Mr.

Murray has given me repeated proofs of confidence and christian affection--by permitting me to preach in his stead in Geneva--by sympathizing in the trials I have endured and furnishing relief, and by granting letters of introduction to clergymen and letters of recommendation to churches in various parts of W.N.Y. Rev. Mr. Clark too Sec'y of the Mass. branch of your benevolent So. has shown me repeated proofs of confidence and friendship. Whilst in the service of that Branch declaring fearlessly the whole counsel of God at Scituate--in the midst of a Unitarian, ignorant and I am pained to add licentious community, under my affliction I certainly enjoyed his christian and ministerial sympathy. And I know of but one clergyman in the circle of my acquaintance with whom I have had altercation and that one is the Rev. Doct. Tucker while he was pastor in Troy and myself a poor missionary of yours in Pittstown. But if I have truly preached Christ and faithfully rebuked sin, I ought to expect, the wise providence of God will afford opportunities for exercising the grace of forgiveness toward enemies. If I know what spirit I am of I experience much delight in cherishing that affection. Still we may have anger and grief in the soul and sin not. Such anger while I feel in view of the conduct of a young man of Tecumseh toward myself and the church in Raisin. Mr. X has conspired with a few troublers of Zion in hostility to us both. He has officiously interfered with our interests and prosperity--fanned the flames of discontent and furnished abundant proof to this community that his character strictly corresponds with his reputation. To wit. that he is youth without experience, unfortunately enveloped in a cloud of impudence that darkens but ordinary talents. Are such men to trample under foot veteran soldiers of the cross, blast their reputation, destroy their usefulness, inflict misery upon their wives and children and spread the death pall over Zion? God forbid. Do not conjecture that I speak inadvisedly or "set down aught in malice," "I know what I say and whereof I affirm." But other pressing duties and your exhausted patience require that I bring this communication to a close. To do justice to my subject requires much more--I could not say less. Under the circumstances in which I am placed--having taken the vows of a minister of Jesus Christ upon me--delighting in my sacred calling--disqualified by the nature of my professional pursuits for the ordinary avocations of life--destitute of pecuniary means--permit me to enquire, whether, in case I find and preach to a feeble church in Michigan and furnish the regular testimonials of character and qualifications, I may expect the confidence and patronage of the A.H.M.S. I ask this

the more earnestly because without that patronage there is no reasonable ground to hope for support, and consequently I shall be compelled, if possible, to retrace my steps to N.Y. You cannot but feel the importance to me & my family of a speedy answer to this, which you will be pleased to direct to me at Ann Arbor, care of Rev. C.C.Taylor.

With prayer for yr happiness
I subscribe myself your fellow servant in Christ

Phineas Smith.

W. C. SMITH

This letter from the Rev. W. C. Smith gives a clear idea as to the specific data which the American Home Missionary Society expected to receive from its several missionaries in their quarterly reports. An examination of the letters which are shown will reveal that many of the letters do take this general form or order of reporting. None, however, lists the required statistics quite as orderly as does this letter from the Rev. W. C. Smith.

While the Rev. Mr. Smith was definitely a Presbyterian in his doctrine and practice, he freely worked with the Congregationalists, and served an eight year pastorate with the East Saginaw Congregational Church. This probably preceded his pastorate with the Sharon Center Church, in Washtenaw County, where he was serving when this letter was written.

A contemporary said of the Rev. Smith that "he was a man of genial disposition, a good pastor and an excellent sermonizer---a man consecrated and unselfish." He died in Urbana, Illinois, while still active in his calling.

The letter was mailed at the Manchester post office, and was addressed to the society at "Bible House, Astor Place." It will be noted that most of the other letters had been addressed to the society at "150 Nassau Street," indicating a removal of the office of the society to a new address in the early 1850s.

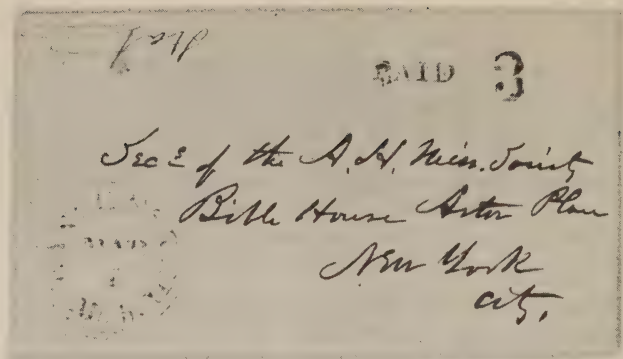
Sharon, Mich. Mch 7, 1854

Sec's of the A.H.M.S.

Dear Brethren, Below is a year's record of doings & progress of our Church, ---

1st--1st Cong'l Church, Sharon, Wash'a Co Mich.

2.--No. of Stations	One
3.--No. of ch. members	27
4thNo. of hopeful conversions	3
5th " added by profession	3
6th " " by letter	2



7th Average no. of attendance from 75 to 100 & upwards
8th.--Contributions to benevolent objects

Home Missions	\$15.---	Foreign Missions	\$7.31
A.S.S. Union	\$ 5.76	A.S. For. Christ 'n Union	\$7.79
Total to all objects			\$35.86

Above is our synopsis. It is not large, nor what it should be; yet you have learned not to despise the day of small things.
--Three have been added to us on profession & two by letter.

Our Sab. School till winter came averaged about 40 & 50.--
The Bible class from 12 to 20.--They commence again on the 1st of April.--

We have lost by death 2 very good members. Our benevolence is not large, but it is good considering the community from which our congregation is made up, i.e. from Methodists.

Accept my thanks for that most excellent Sermon by Dr. Smith on the death of your co-worker who has gone to his rest, Dr. Hall.--

By the way, will not S.H.Hall of Syracuse be just the man for 'Dr. Hall's successor? He you know was of our State; & I know of no one better, readier & apter business talent in our whole Synod of Michigan; or indeed of the Gen'l Association.

Yours very truly

W.C.Smith

SOLOMON STEVENS

This letter from the Rev. Solomon Stevens is about all we have been able to find about this missionary. The history of Allegan County does mention one S. Stevens as one of the ministers serving the Otsego Congregational Church, but that is the only reference we can find to this gentleman, except he is named as one of the ministers of the Somerset Presbyterian Church.

Stevens served not only the Otsego church, but also the church at nearby Gun Plains. His letter is both interesting and informative, especially as it relates to the temperance problem which was beginning to assume national importance.

Some of the letters which we are reproducing here raise an interesting question in respect to the spelling ability of the authors. In some of the letters rather unusual and difficult words are correctly spelled, whereas some of the shorter and more common words are misspelled. We have endeavored, however, to reproduce the letters exactly as written, except occasionally we have inserted a word obviously omitted or have indicated in parenthesis the unintentional repetition of a word.

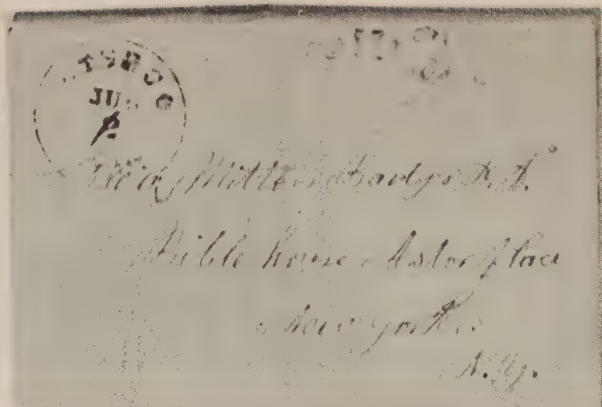
This letter was mailed from the Otsego post office and bears the blurred townmark of that office, in black. Most all of the covers originating in this post office during this period carry poorly struck postmarks. The letter was addressed to the new office of the society, Bible House, Astor Place.

Otsego Allegan Co. Mich'n June 30th, 1853

To the Secretaries of Cor. of the A.H.M.S.

Gentlemen: the third quarter of my second year in this place ends today. And I would now present my report for the past quarter in this place and Gun plains.

By the blessing of Divine Providence, I have been enabled to pursue my regular routine of labours, and perform a con-



siderable service in visiting the sick and attending four funerals.

I stated in my last report that, I attended the funeral of eighteen persons from the 24th of last Oct. to the 1st of April. Since that time, I have preached 5 or six funral sermons, and have spent considerable time with the sick and (and) dying.

I have preached regularly here, in the morning of every Sabbath, and in the afternoon at Gunplain, and in the evening, in the winter, and at 5 P.M. in the summer, in this place; except on the first and second Sabbaths in each month which are occupied with the monthly and Sabbath School concirts.

We keep up a prayer meeting on Wednesday evening, in which, as well as the Sabbath evening meetings, concerts, preparatory services to the communion, are pretty well attended:

Our Sabbath schools here, and on the plains, are very well attended and quite prosperous.

The ladies of my congregation, in this place, meet in the capacity of a Sewing Society, every alternate week. They have voted to appropriate the avails of the efforts this year to the H.M.S. We have about \$40 subscribed last year, and taken in collection when Mr Clark was here for the Same Society, but there is an extreme and culpable negligence in collecting it, as well as in paying me, and indeed in, all matters of zeal; quite too common in this State, and I suppose, throughout the

West. As soon as I can get what is now due I design to preach a Sermon, on the subject of Home Missions here, and on the plains and take a collection for the H. M. S.

What has been done in raising funds since my last report has been for the temprance, antislavery, and Sabbath school cause about \$5 each.

Our efforts in the cause of temprance, which have been put forth with zeal, and perseverance, since last fall, have been crowned with abundant success.

We have got the Maine liquor law ratefied by the popular vote, by not less than 20,000. Most of the towns, where the traffic and drinking greatly prevailed, have given very large majorities in favor of the law. This unexpected result gives forth courage and joy, and gladness to the friends of temprance, and fills the breasts of its enemies full of grief and sadness and wrath. They are called here the mourners No decision, that has ever been made by the people of this, or any other State, since the declaration of Independence, can equal the importance of this vote upon all the interests of Society.

We have had only one communion in this place, and one in Gunplains since my last report both seasons of interest and I trust a considerable Spiritual good. Of the fruits of the little interest we had last winter 4 united with this church, and 4 more we expect will come forward (2 by letter) the next Sabbath. 3 united at Gun plain. Some have been received into the Baptist and Methodist churches (of the late subjects)

The Church of Gun plain has recently been afflicted by the death of Br. C. Thomson, a trustee, and an Elder, and last year the Suprintendent of the Sabbath School, the most able active and efficient member of the church. I mentioned in my last report the death of Mrs. M. Martin the wife of an other elder. The remaining elder is superanuated, and does not often attend meeting. So that the church is becoming very weak in efficiency and pecuniary resources, and like this, and many other churches in this region, much weaker in a disposition to do what they can, and to meet their engagements.

There is now no preaching except of our order on the plains, which renders it the more important for that church to keep up, and let its light shine. There are many Universalists, and others of no particular belief in religion, who do not attend meetings or take any interest in promoting the cause of religion or Sabbath Schools, or any of the Reforms of the day.

There is however a gradual gain in all those things. The friends of religion and good order, and those who sustain religious institutions and promote good order, are very generally admitted even by the worst and most immoral to be the most worthy of confidence and respect.

But with all the improvements and gain (in) many respects; there are hard fields to cultivate. Here and most of the churches in the State owe their existence and progress and growth to the A. H. M. S. decidedly the most important benevolent institution of the present day.

With the sincere prayer, that, this noble institution may greatly increase in usefulness, and enjoy, the smiles and approbation of Heaven. I remain Yours sincerely

Solomon Stevens

JAMES A. B. STONE

Almost all of the letters which are reproduced here have been written by or about missionaries and ministers who were serving in Michigan at the times the several letters were written. Dr. James A. B. Stone, while an ordained minister, entered the teaching profession, and after a brief pastorate, spent the remainder of a very active life in teaching.

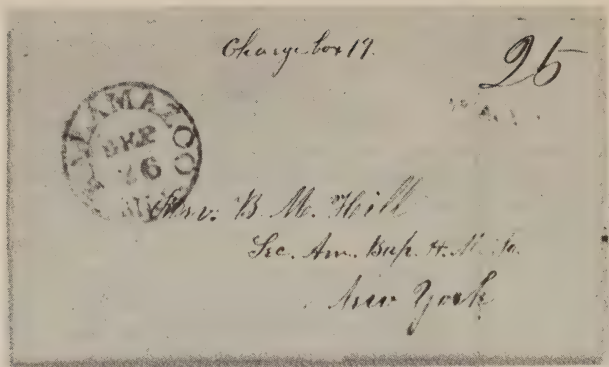
A graduate of Middlebury College and Andover Theological Seminary, Dr. Stone came to Michigan from New England in 1843. His wife was a gifted teacher also and together they established a fine reputation for the Kalamazoo Branch of the University of Michigan, which at that time had "branches" in several Michigan cities.

In 1855 the Kalamazoo Branch of the University was changed to Kalamazoo College, with Dr. Stone as its president, which office he held for nine years. While not taken over by the Baptists at that time, it was generally recognized as a Baptist college, as it is today.

Dr. Stone died in Detroit at the age of 86, and was buried in the city where he gained great prominence, Kalamazoo.

Dr. Stone's letter here reproduced pleads the case of the village of St. Joseph, much as the Rev. J. N. Parsons pleaded the case of the village of Niles.

It will be noted that this letter, unlike most of the other letters shown, was sent to the secretary of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society. It carries the red circular handstamp of Kalamazoo, with a faint PAID in red.



Kalamazoo, Mich. Sept. 24th 1844

Dear bro. Hill,

On Lake Michigan (just opposite Chicago) & at the mouth of the St. Joseph River, stands the village of St. Joseph. The gazeteer says that five years ago there were 12 or 1500 inhabitants within its narrow bounds. I should think there were fewer now. It is an extraordinary place. It has a good harbor; the best on that side of the Lake, & the U.S. Government are improving it. It is the outlet of a rich valley, very rich, & will be a place of importance.

It has now five hotels--15 places for retailing ardent spirits. Several ten-pin alleys; roulette & billiard tables, I know not how many. They roll ten-pins on the Sabbath, as on other days--except, for decency's sake, they muffle their board! They are not behind the times in any form of vice. Have no district school of any kind except one Select School taught by a Mr. Hawley, who also preaches to them occasionally, or rather once on the Sabbath. There is no organized church in town --of any denomination. No meeting house--one poor little school house serves as a common synagogue. Mr. Hawley preaches once each Sabbath--& recently a Methodist Circuit preacher has done the same. There are ten or twelve Baptists there--& not more than that number of any denomination. They all seem to think that no man careth for their souls & I fear they care but too little themselves. Very few keep the Sabbath as holy time, but the most as a day of pastime & amusement, or else continue on with their customary labor.

And so they go on, their numbers increasing, but no good influences spring up among them. They must come from without, or never exist. If a man could be sent there to labor among them constantly or the most of the time, there seems to be a prospect of usefulness. Perhaps a man might live there & preach alternate Sabbaths at Berrien--15 miles up the river, where there is a branch of a Baptist Church which might assist somewhat in supporting a man.

At a recent meeting of the Board of our Convention they voted to request me to bring the case to the notice of the Board of the B.H.M. So. They were not prepared to make a formal application for aid now, but expect to do so, & wished the picture of the place presented to your Board that they might have time for their compassion to enlarge.

The Board of our Convention meet soon, & will probably communicate then with you on the subject. In the mean time will not your Board begin to pity St. Joseph. I think you remarked in your letter recently to bro. Allen that nearly as much had been done for Michigan as they were entitled to, dividing your bounty among the Western States--but does it not appear to be more, on paper, than it really is? Some appointments are not fulfilled--some more, I believe have given up, or are about to do so, their commissions. We are thankful for what we have, & only wish it were consistent to send us more.

Yours, in Christian bonds,

James A.B.Stone

JAMES R. TAYLOR

Two ministers with the same name served Michigan congregations in its early days. These men were the James R. Taylors.

One was James Rice Taylor, an Episcopalian rector, and, among others, he served the Protestant Episcopal churches of Allegan and Grand Haven.

The other James R. Taylor was a missionary commissioned by the American Home Missionary Society, and it is his letter which we reproduce here. He is reporting on his accomplishments with the congregation of the Congregational Church of Lakvill (Lakeville) in the northeast corner of Oakland County.

Although the Rev. Mr. Taylor seemed somewhat encouraged by the prospects of this church, his fears that it might soon be left "without a Shepherd" seem to have been justified, for in checking the earliest printed history of Addison Township and its village of Lakeville, in 1877, only one church was reported in this community, a Methodist church.

Taylor also served the Romeo Congregational Church, but it is not certain whether he spent the other "Sabbaths alternately" in that church or some other church in the vicinity.

His Scriptural references to "dry bones" and the "pruning" of the "choice vine" by "the great Husbandman" gives some insight into his theological background and his earnestness in his missionary problems.

This letter was mailed from Almont and bears the attractive boxed townmark, struck in blue. It is a rare cover.

Lapeer Co., Michigan.
Almont, Nov. 5th, 1846

Rev. Milton Badger &)
Rev. Chas, Hall)

Dear Brethren

In compliance with the terms of my commission I now forward a report of my doings for the past year. I have not forwarded quarterly reports according to the third requirement for, as you may recollect, I did not receive my commission until July, when I concluded to defer until the expiration of the year which was the first day of Nov. 1846. I will however embody as briefly as possible in my present communication. I have now labored two successive years (less one month) with the Chh. at Lakevill. The first year, I rec'd 37\$ and for my past years services I am to receive 40\$. I have during the past year, visited most of the families in that section, and was amply rewarded by securing a better attendance on public worship on the Sabbath. I found many professors of rel'n, (for there are but few who do not profess to be of some name) but few who seemed to have the powere of Godliness. In many families I was most cordially rec'd, while others would say by their action at least, they wanted no such interruption. Meetings for social prayer have been sustained, and for some time during the year, have been interesting. But I am constrained to say "the love of many waxes cold." And the Spirit of the Lord must cause a shaking among the "dry bones" soon, or they will utterly perish.

There has been but one impenitent person during the year who manifested to me special solicitude for the interest of his soul. He has removed to a distant place & I know not whether he has since found salvation in a bleeding Savior.

One person has been rec'd by the Chh on profess'n.
3 " " " " " " " " by letter.

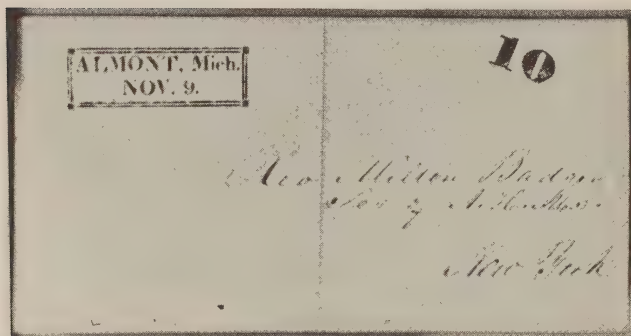
Sabbath S. & Bible Class number 30 Thirty
S.S. Library consists of 100 vol.

Much has been done to check the progress of intemperance, but the number of subscribers I am unable to give---probably however there are 200.

Four dollars have been contributed for the A.H.M. Society, which am't you will please deduct from that due me. The name of the Chh above referred to is Cong'l Church of Lakevill--in the town of Addison, Oakland Co. Michigan, with which Chh I have spent one half of the Sabbaths alternately. It is a young but choice vine, which I hope may be pruned by the great Husbandman, till it becomes great and abundantly fruitful. Still I fear they will soon be left like many, without a Shepherd, as I shall be unable to supply them much longer. May the Lord bless them & their benefactors, and ultimately bring them all into his heavenly Kingdom for Cht's sake.

Yours in the bonds of Chr. fellowship

James R. Taylor



OREN C. THOMPSON

The amount of available biographical data respecting the several missionaries whose letters are here reproduced varies considerably. For some there are to be found the barest of details. For others there can be found many references in the history of early Michigan. Of the latter group was the Rev. Oren C. Thompson.

The reason for this variance in available biographical data can be explained, in part at least, by the fact that some of the missionaries died at an early age, returned to the East, or moved to other parts of the country. Some, such as "Father" Isaac Ruggles and Oren C. Thompson, to name only two, remained in the communities in which they had preached and labored, many years after their active ministry was concluded, and they have left us a rather complete record of their later lives.

Thompson, a New Englander, himself tells us that he arrived in Detroit, then a town of three thousand inhabitants, on board the "Henry Clay," in August, 1831, after having been graduated just previously from the Princeton Theological Seminary. By denomination Thompson was a Congregationalist, but he came to Michigan Territory under commissions from both the American Tract Society and the American Sunday School Union.

Thompson's first duty was to visit all the settlements of the Territory, and his reminiscences of his journeys around Michigan, written forty years later, are still referred to because of his vivid description of places which have since become our principal cities.

After his visitation to the various settlements, he returned to Detroit, where he busied himself in supplying Sunday Schools of the area with libraries, a very important part of every church program in those early days.

In the Fall of 1832 Thompson went to Ann Arbor as a teacher in the Ann Arbor Academy. Many of his pupils came from Detroit. The University of Michigan had not yet located in that village, in fact, had not yet been established in its first home in Detroit.

In 1834 the Rev. Mr. Thompson left his school work in Ann Arbor and was ordained pastor of the Congregational Church of St. Clair, a charge which he filled for several years. In addition to his ministerial duties, Thompson also continued his teaching, several of his Ann Arbor pupils following him to St. Clair. This resulted in his building, in 1842, the St. Clair Academy, with a capacity of 50 pupils, and he conducted the academy until poor health caused him to discontinue his teaching five years later.

Thompson presided at the organization of the church at Port Huron in 1840, at which time he stated that there was no church of his denomination nearer than the St. Clair church. He served as pastor of the Salem Presbyterian Church, Washtenaw County, in 1867, and was pastor of the Royal Oak Congregational Church for two different periods in the early seventies.

Thompson lived to be 90 years of age, and remained intellectually virile to the last. Some of the letters in this group either refer to Thompson or have a postscript by or about him. The full-length letter from Thompson himself indicates some feeling of jealousy between the two denominations which he had been serving for years, and shows his desire for conciliation and tolerance between the two groups. He would be a valuable citizen in any community, then or now.

The brief note from Thompson was sent from St. Clair and it bears the rare manuscript marking of that post office. The last two letters in the group also originated in St. Clair.

Rev. & Dear Sir

Last April we wrote you by the Rev. Mr. Davis Agent of the American Bible Society respecting our condition as a people in relation to a preached Gospel Mr. Davis after traveling through this County said that there was the least moral force with us than in any Co. in the Territory and that he knew of none after having visited all that more needed Missionary labor Our case is indeed urgent There are in this Co. more than 1200 inhabitants & destitute of all Gospel Sound except

that of a young illiterate methodist sent amongst us about nine months in the year This does not begin to put down the prevalence of vice and immorality of Universalism and the march of the man of sin. We have received no answer from you and had despaired of help this season until we saw in the Observer a notice that the H. M. S. would be able to send out to the western states 20 missionaries the present month and as some were to come to this Territory we would renew our plea for aid The number is considerable that desire a Missionary to be sent us We can raise \$1,00 or more toward his support A Church of eight or ten members and perhaps more might and ought to be formed here.

The Court House for the present is a convenient and good place to hold meetings We do need aid very much and trust our Christian friends will take our case into consideration and send over and help us.

Yours very respectfully

Rev. A. Peters

Benjamin Bissell

To the Corresponding Secretary H. Mission

Dear Sir

Doct. Bissell after writing the foregoing, handed it to me for the purpose of having me add if possible some new inducement for the Society to send us a Minister of the gospel

Should a petition be handed round this county for signatures, I am confident they would eagerly sign one for the obtaining of so desirable an object--But there are those among us who would not do the least thing to advance the undertaking, & they are the identical ones that need the word preached to them in all its force they are Universalists--there are some 12 or 15 in this county who pride themselves on being the more zealous of (their) good works--Books have been sent and papers, pamphlets etc are taken through the mail to a greater extent than any other one publication at this office--I do hope that from among so large a number as the Society has this fall, to send out, that we shall not be forgotten or passed by--One hundred dollars or more might be raised towards the support of a preached word & the good that could in this way be done would be incalculable.

I do hope my dear Sir that we may hear from your society the good news that we have not appealed in vain--Should you have sent any to this Territory without any definite assignation, might not the Rev'd Mr. Wells of Detroit be a means of giving a right direction to their destination?

I am Sir very respectfully

Your ob't

Sam'l F. Hopkins

12 Oct. 1831

* * * * *

St Clair March 31 1835

Respected Brother in Christ.

Agreeable to the rules of A.H.M.S. I sit down to make out a report of my labors since I came here on the fifth of Nov. last. We are situated somewhat singularly being so far from any other church as to render our situation like a mission family. A large tract of country with a sparse population surrounds us many of whom are engaged in the lumbering business and therefore somewhat unsettled. But the country is now becoming more settled with permanent inhabitants. My church is composed of 25 members who have come from different parts of the country, and have found considerable difficulty in becoming wanted to each other. It is the most serious difficulty with which I have to contend. Before I came here to reside I was called to preside at church meetings in which every member of the church except three were accusers or accused. The Lord blessed the means which I adopted for the settlement of these differences, the most of which arose from a too liberal use of the tongue and misapprehension. Recent impropriety of the same kind has made new trouble and revived some of the old. But I trust it will be of short duration.

The Lord is most evidently manifesting his readiness to pour out his Spirit here if his church are prepared to receive it. One after another have for several weeks been convicted of sin so as to acknowledge it and ask for the prayers of the people of God. One of them I hope has been brought into the kingdom who now thinks of commencing a course of Study pre-

paratory for the ministry. If there was more unity in the church, I should expect a rain of righteousness here. I fear we shall have to cut off one member at least soon. I expect some addition at our next communion season.

A Sabbath School which I have organized here is flourishing. It includes some of all ages who are giving good attention to the subject.

We are some straightened for room in our house of worship which has been rarely filled before this season. It is the court room and therefore claimed a part of the time by the Methodists. The want of a larger house and one which we can occupy any time, is a serious inconvenience and is becoming more so. I have recently thought much of writing to some of the eastern churches saying as Hannani did to Nehemiah--in hopes of obtaining help to build a house unto our God. The people here have sacrificed much in settling a new country and their means are quite limited at present. We stand the only church of our order in the county which I trust will at no distant day contain scores of churches. I have visited most of the settlements in the County and preached in them occasionally. In returning from such a tour, last week, I rode most of the day in a constant shower of rain there being no time to look between one appointment and another and indeed I must have taken shelter under a hollow tree if I stopt it being the best on the road. I think sometimes of what one of my friends in Detroit said as I was about to leave that city for this place. "I should as willingly take a mission to China as to accompany you to your contemplated residence." But it is sweet to be here, for duty calls me. Here I can, if the Lord will, labor and die contentedly. The name of our church is the First Presbyterian Church of St. Clair, in the township of St. Clair, County of St. Clair, Michigan Territory. Post office St. Clair.

I commenced my labors here under the direction and support of A.H.M.S. on the fifth day of Nov. 1834. Since that I trust we have had one conversion to the Christian faith recently.

Five have been added to the church by letter.

Two have been added " " " by profession.

Our Sabbath School. 80 pupils, old & young, 275 vol. in library. One Temperance Society 80 subscribers formed since I came here.

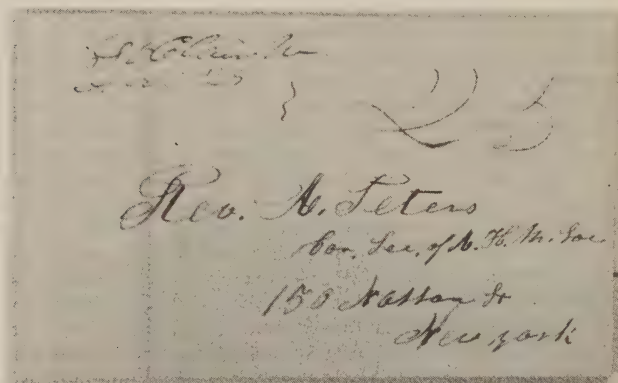
Monthly concert observed in this village established since I came here.

Donation to A. Tr. Soc. \$3,25 *
To Foreign Missionary Soc. \$6,35

Yours with much esteem

Oren C. Thompson

*American Tract Society.



I have just received a letter from the Sec. of the Missionary ass. of the Sabbath School of its Dalcro Street church, N.Y. which speaks of a letter from you which I have never received. I believe I have received no letter from you for about a year. Our winter mail is uncertain and defective, I have been in suspense which that letter would doubtless have removed. I have answered the letter to the said Mis. ass. which I hope you may be enabled to see as a continuation of my report if such facts are wanted.

Yours in haste

O.C. Thompson

* * * * *

PAID
D J
Rev^d Milton Badger

Cor. Sec. A.H.M.S.

No 150 e. Kappan St

N. York

Port Huron St Clair County Mich'n
Dec'r 15 1839

To the cor. Sec. of the A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir

The inhabitants of this Village and vicinity are now making efforts to establish and build up religious institutions in this place and for the purpose have secured the labours of the Rev'd O.C. Thompson, provided we can make up his support, and on account of the few who are, as yet, interested in this effort and of the great contributions which this few have had in a short time, to make, as herein after stated, we are induced to apply to your Society for pecuniary assistance for the coming year.

That you may see the importance of this effort, let me request you to cast your eye on the map of Mich'n and look at the location of this place; situated at the foot of Lake Huron, at the head of the River St Clair, a terminating point of a daily line of Steam Boats from Detroit also the termination of the State Northern rail road, now located & partially constructed. Our Village contains a population of between 5 and 600. It may surprise you that nothing of the kind proposed here, has be commenced before, but such is the fact. About a year and a half ago I removed from Detroit to this place. A very few others came in about the same time who were members of the

Presbyterian denomination. Our first effort was to build a meeting house, which was accomplished at an expense of \$750 which was borne by three or four individuals. The house is completely finished, painted supplied with Stove, lamps, book case. We have a Sabbath School of 60 to 80 Schollars--Library 200 Volls. Last year we assisted in supporting a Methodist minister located here for one year, but we now think the time has arrived for us to make an effort to support a minister of our own denomination, which as pecuniary matters now are in this region, we cannot do without aid from your Society--The Methodists have not located a preacher here this year we supported him last year or very nearly so.

We propose soon to organise a presbyterian Church; but it must be very small at first and the support of a minister must rest heavily on a few

We have been encouraged to hope that an application to the A.H.M.S. for assistance in our present condition would be successful. The amount which we need is \$200; but we will make request for only \$150 and endeavour to raise the remainder among ourselves

I understand Mr. Thompson has been under the patronage & support of your Society, and that this his last year, expired on the first of Oct'r last--which would be a proper time for his commission to be dated, as he has laboured here and elsewhere in the County since that time

Very truly

Your obt Svt

Justin Rice

P.S.

Detroit Ap 3 1840

Soon after the above was written I was called unexpectedly to spend the winter in this city, & the above was not forwarded. I return to morrow to Port Huron. Mr. Thompson has laboured there all winter--no church is yet formed; but we intended to organise soon after my return. Mr. Thompson's labours appear to have been blessed. The congregation has increased with increasing attention to all our religious interests, & I believe a few conversions-- Mr Thompson has been supported the past winter by a few friends--and we are in great want of

the \$150, as before requested, & without this aid we cannot continue him there the year.

Yours very truly

Justin Rice

I concur in the above

E.P.Hastings

* * * * *

Port Huron 1843

Rev'd Milten Badger

Dear Sir

We are now making an effort to secure the labors of a settled Pastor in our Village & have preaching evry Sabbath instead of once in two weeks as heretofore--The Rev'd Peter Boughton has consented to become our Pastor provided he can be sustained--The amount that it will be possible for us to raise will not exceed \$250-- & our minister cannot support his family on a less sum than \$400--It is much more expensive living here than in any other part of the state, Detroit not excepted--We therefore feel compelled (though with great reluctance) to solicit your assistance to the amount of \$1.50 (\$150.)--This we would not do, if we had the ability to sustain the regular preaching of the gospel without it--Our village is daily increasing in size & importance, & such is the character of our population, & such the centuminating (contaminating) influences thrown around us, that without efficient action on the part of God's people multitudes of souls must go down to death --We hope by the blessing of God very soon to be able to sustain the institutions of the gospel among ourselves, & to aid in supplying other destitute portions of our land with the bread of eternal life--

We have assumed the title of the first Congregational ch. of Port Huron St. Clair Co--Michigan--

Mr. Boughton commenced his labors with us on the first

Sabbath of Oct. from which date we hope to receive your assistance--Let us hear from you as soon as convenient--

Your Brethren in the Gospel

Edmund D. Northrup
Edwin Thompson

P.S. We would simply add that in our opinion few places in the Western Valley so abound in wickedness & so much need the regular preaching of the gospel.

(Note at bottom)

I full concur in the sentiments expressed
except the last and that is not very far
from being true.

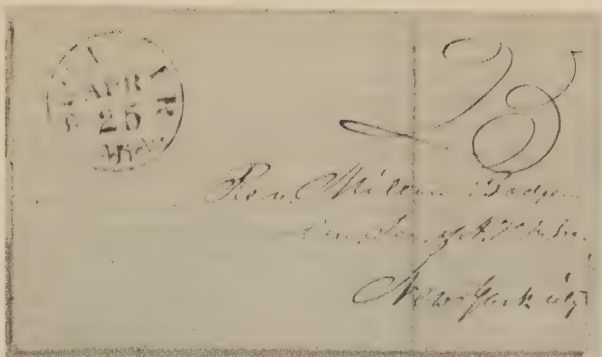
O. C. Thompson

* * * * *

Rev Milton Badger.

Dear Brother.

A circumstance has occurred of late that has induced me to write to you for advice, etc. It has long been the wish of many of our congregational friends in this state to have the churches visited by an evangelist who shall spend six months or a year in traveling from ch. to ch, & from village to village staying in each as long as is necessary to administer the ordinances etc etc. The first that I heard of this particularly was the the meeting of our Gen Ass. last fall. A correspondence with the Con. Mis Soc was read. It appeared that application had been made to them for aid in sustaining this missionary. The work appeared to me to be very desirable. Bro. Hobert was expecting to engage in it. I heard nothing more from it till in the winter, I wrote to Bro. Hobert on other business, and incidentally enquired what had been done in the Gen Missionary work. I received an answer that no missionary had been secured and that I was requested to undertake the work. Soon after this the chairman of our Dom Com of Miss. addressed me on the subject. I did not feel prepared to accept or refuse at that time, and delayed answering the letter. A few days ago I was at De-



troit and met Mr. Hammond the Auditor Gen. of our State, who is a brother of the chairman of our Dom. Com. of Miss. He had just received a letter from his brother saying that our Con. friends had hesitated in appointing the Missionary as they had been informed that it would make trouble between the Congregationalists and the presbyterians in this region. I know not how such an impression was made on their minds & is supposed that it may have been made by some presbyterian in this region. Now I wish to say that I do not think that any such result ought to be expected. I am certain no such result would be desired on our part. If the work was judiciously performed it would strengthen the presbyterians as well as the congregationalist. I feel, for one, decidedly opposed to doing anything that shall crowd con. & pres. further apart, and if they must differ, let them do it in some other region than this. We have no strength to spare in such a work. I could never consent to become a missionary to embarrass my presbyterian brethren. I know there are some of my congregational brethren who do not feel as I do on this point, but they are few. They feel that the presbyterians are embarrassing the congregationalists, etc, etc. I feel if it is so we must not do any wrong because they do so, but that we need not be greatly concerned about self defense, God will defend us. The sentiment was expressed at our last conference that the A.H.M.S. had neglected some of our congregational churches as they would not neglect presbyterian chs. I opposed this sentiment, & read from your letters which I happened to have with me. The conference generally agreed with me in this particular. Respecting this matter of a missionary for the churches generally I feel that it is quite desirable at least for six months or a year. If then a desirable

missionary can be found & sustained, I do not desire to engage in the work without it is duty to do so.

I have been informed that you are authorized to send the New Englander to Missionaries at reduced price. If so will you send it to me and retain the pay from the last quarter, and if it is too late for that, will you take it from the quarter now due.

I organised a Sabbath School last Sabbath. About half the congregation came into it. Two adult classes with gray heads. One large class of youth including a lawyer & doctor etc, the number of other classes not yet fully ascertained. We shall probably have about 100 scholars. This last you may if you please consider as an appendage to my annual report if it is in time.

Yours affectionately

O.C. Thompson

PHILIP TITCOMB

While it would appear that most of the missionaries sent to Michigan under the auspices of the American Home Society remained in the field for the rest of their lives, it is true that some of them remained only briefly, and returned to their former homes in the East as soon as their commission expired. The failure to find any mention of some of these men in our church histories leads to the conclusion, possibly unfounded, that a few of these men found the rigors and privations of missionary life in Michigan too arduous, and returned to more comfortable parishes elsewhere.

Careful search has disclosed only one reference to the Rev. Philip Titcomb, and it merely confirms the facts evidenced by the letter here reproduced that he served the Presbyterian Church of Hillsdale in 1847. He served but the one year. In 1847 Hillsdale was a thriving community in the state.

There is nothing in Titcomb's letter to indicate any desire to leave his charge. In fact, his interest in building up a library for his church suggests plans for the future. It is unfortunate that we get such a brief glimpse of so many of these early missionaries, who contributed so much to the development of our state.

The Titcomb letter was mailed from Hillsdale and carries the circular handstamp of the Hillsdale post office, struck in blue.

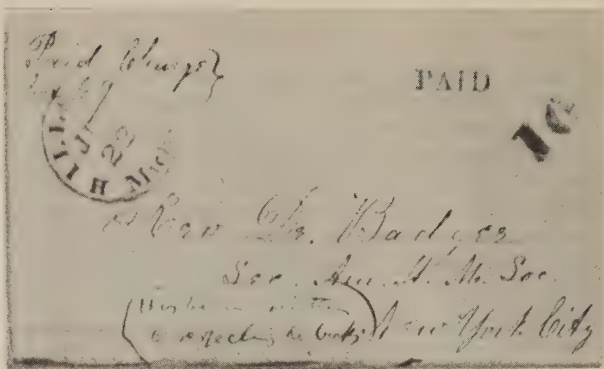
Hillsdale, Mond. June 21, 1847.

Dr. Badger dear Sir

I wrote a letter in April to a gentleman in Portland Me soliciting a library for the Sab. Sch connected with the Pres, Ch. here.

I rec'd a line from him dated Jun. 8th in which he informs me that he has procured a library worth \$25.

He stated also that he had directed it to your care at New York to be forwarded to me.



I write you this note hoping it will reach you in time to have the library sent on by Mr. Hall of Hillsdale who is now in New York.

Mr. Hall can probably get the library on here at an earlier date than if it were sent without any one to attend to it. We are much in want of the library & ought to have had one earlier in the season. I rec'd the books for which I sent to you, in safety, for your kindness I am truly obliged.

I sent to you my report for the quarter ending May 10th some time since, which presume has been duly rec'd.---The books amounted to \$10.92.--

Very truly

Philip Titcomb.

PETER STRYKER VAN NEST

One of the missionaries who came to the village of Flint in its earliest days was the Rev. Peter Stryker Van Nest. The church at Flint had been organized as a Congregational church, but in 1840, under the leadership of the Rev. Orson Parker, it changed to a Presbyterian communion. Parker later returned to hold revival meetings in Flint, and was the regular pastor of the Rochester Congregational Church from 1846 to 1848.

Van Nest was preceded in the Flint pastorate by the Rev. John Beach, a preaching evangelist who was encouraged to come to Flint by his son-in-law, George H. Hazelton, prominent merchant in the early days of Flint. But Beach yearned to return to his evangelism, so gave up his Flint charge, and Van Nest took over. Van Nest later removed to Wisconsin.

We reproduce two letters from Van Nest, both while he was serving the Flint church. They reflect a devotion to duty and a serious concern for the strengthening of the church and its ordinances.

Both letters are marked with the red circular hand-stamp of the Flint post office, which, until 1836, was officially known as Flint River.

Flint Oct. 3, 1842

Rev'd Milton Badger,

Dear Brother.

While the quarter through wh. we have just passed has not been marked with any general manifestations of the presence of God—still we have not been destitute of indications of good—such as cheer the heart of the christian & the Minister & call for devout gratitude & acknowledgement & praise. Although the last quarter has been the season of the year that requires the closest attention—especially of a farming community—to their business—still our meetings have all been increasingly attended—the Church appear to be almost unitedly coming up to the work—awaking as I trust—to some sense

of their responsibilities. We have had during the last quarter two communion seasons—both impressively solemn—some few have united with us at each season—two months since we had a communion season & two prominent men in the place—heads of families—whose families were in connection with us—left the house of God deeply convicted—both of whom soon came out openly & decidedly for Christ—immediately established the Family altar—presented their children for Baptism—united in the prayer-meeting & yesterday for the first time in the midst of a large congregation came around the table of our Common Lord—the Enemy felt that their ranks were broken—saw & acknowledged the change—they will be a great accession to our strength as a Church

We have purchased during the last quarter the Christian Library published by the American Tract Society—45 vols—wh. promises to be of much good in this community. We wish in every practicable way to get the truth of God before the mind of the people & then look to God for his own blessing—thus he has been wont to work & thus we believe he will ever work.

That the blessing of the great Head of the Church may rest upon you & your Missionaries & their respective fields of labor is our ardent desire & believing prayer—

Yours in Christian fellowship

P. S. Van Nest
Missionary at Flint,
Genessee Co. Mich.

* * * * *

Flint July 5th, 1844
Genessee Co. Mich

Rev'd Milton Badger,

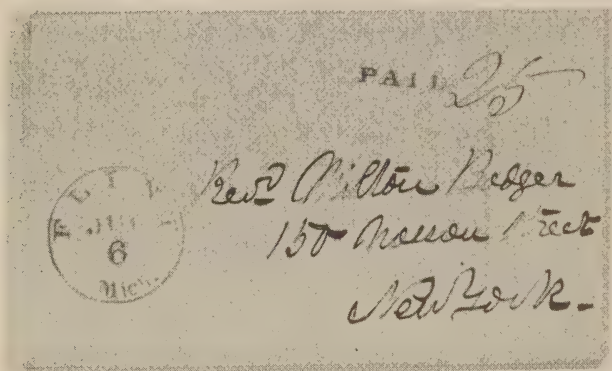
Dear Brother,

The quarter of My year just expired contains nothing of very special interest for communication---My health has been quite feeble & my labors very hard—Our meetings have been well attended & of usual interest—The Church & Society are increasing in strength & interest—The labor is becoming very arduous—too much for my health & strength & before the close of another quarter I may find it necessary for me

to leave this field & enter one more concentrated & less arduous. The Lord will decide—I look to him for wisdom—I will advise you if it should result in my removal---There is a growing interest here in the objects of Benevolence—I wish you to give the First Pres. Chh. of Grand Blanc credit for five dollars & deduct it from my last quarter's instalment due me from the A.H.M.S. for labor performed & reported agreeably to the terms of my commission twenty dollars wh. will be gratefully received as soon as practicable.

Your's in Gospel Bonds.

P.S. Van Nest



E. F. WALDO

Another slight error to be found in the old county histories of Michigan is corrected by this letter from the Rev. E. F. Waldo, while a minister in Allegan. The only reference to this gentleman in the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections is under the name of the Rev. L. F. Waldo. While the error is not vital, it does indicate how easily errors can creep into the old accounts where one must rely upon memory alone.

Waldo served the Presbyterian Church of Allegan in 1846 and 1847, following the brief pastorate of the Rev. Samuel Newbury, mentioned previously. His sincerity and humility, as expressed in his letter, give some indication of the character of these men who came as missionaries to Michigan in the formative period of the state.

Waldo's letter was mailed at the office then known as Allegan C. H., (for Court House,) one of the few Michigan post offices using that designation in their townmark.

Allegan, Allegan Co. Mich. March 8, 1847

To the Secretaries of the A.H.M.S.

Brethren

I have delayed my annual statistical report, in part, for a few days, that I might in the same communication make my second quarterly report for the current missionary year. The reports I am pained to say must again be very meagre. The past year has been to me & my family one of much sickness & distress—and as a consequence my labors have been much less than they otherwise might have been. Five sabbaths I have been unable to preach at all, & my pastoral labors have been greatly hindered. This field has doubtless suffered greatly for the want of more vigorous ministerial effort. My health is still bad. Within the last fortnight I have been confined to my room almost wholly for half of the time.

The required statistics are substantially as follows:

1. Presbyterian Church (& PO) of Allegan, Allegan Co. Michigan—

- 2,3,4. No hopeful conversions, none added to the church.
 5, & 6. About 120 S. S. Scholars. Some 250 v. in S. S. Library.
 7. About 100 temperance subscribers.
 9. Contributed to the A.H.M.S. 10.13
 A.B.S. 15.04
 Foreign Miss. 7.50 \$32.67

It is proper to remark that the funds collected for Foreign Missions have been collected at the monthly concert & are to be laid out for the purchase of maps for the use of the concert, & perhaps therefore ought not to be reported as above.

With reference to additions to the church our situation is somewhat peculiar. There are some 15 or 20 professed christians of our order in sentiment, tolerably punctual in their attendance upon our meetings & cordially cooperating for the most part in the affairs of the society who for different reasons neglect to unite themselves with the church—one, a young man of liberal education, & ready to every good work, doubts the propriety of uniting with any particular church, i.e. doubts the integrity of every particular church, there are so many of different names all evangelical enough to be embraced in his charity, calling themselves churches—Thus, like him with letters in their pockets stay away for some one reason some another---I have not felt it my duty to urge these individuals till I saw more evidences of piety in them. I have thought in their present state they would be no acquisition of strength to us.

During the year five S.S. have been organized in as many different neighborhoods within our bounds, & three of them have been well attended & flourishing. They are generally stopped at present on account of the inclemency of the season.

Our old temperance society was the result of a tornado produced here a few years since by Augustus Littlejohn formerly a presbyter of Alleghenny presbytery. Multitudes united then who are now many of them drinking beer & some of them whiskey—We came to the conclusion that a new so. must be formed. This was done & an important check put to the beer drinking usages which have been rapidly increasing.

There have been some signs of returning Spiritual strength among the people of God, which has greatly encouraged my heart.

With regard to the past three months the two last mentioned items are those of chief interest---We are looking & waiting for the time when God will favor his Zion and convert sinners.

I ought in conclusion perhaps to mention your kindness in remitting, in my last appropriation four months salary on account of the lateness of my report, so that there is now due but 16 dollars on the present quarter. The extra nine dollars was not less acceptable than unexpected.

May the Lord reward you, & all the patrons of the Home Missionary Society, for all their kindness to the unworthy missionaries in their employ. Fearing that I am most unworthy and most inefficient of them all permit me to subscribe myself affectionately yours in the Gospel.

E. F. Waldo

HART E. WARING

Very little can be learned of the Rev. H. E. Waring, who served several churches in Ionia County about the middle of the last century. The only letter we have from him is dated in 1849 at Lyons, in Ionia County. Both the letter which he writes, and the church records of the communities involved, reveal that he was serving the First Presbyterian Church of Lyons, the Second Congregational Church of the same village, and the Portland Congregational Church. He did serve the Ionia Presbyterian Church for a period, probably as stated supply. It is also believed that he followed the Rev. LeMoyné S. Smith at Ionia, which would mean that his service there preceded his missionary work among the three churches about which he writes.

Lyons August 24 (1849)

Dear Sir

As the terms of the Home Missionary entitle the Congregation to two numbers or nearly so I would request a copy sent to Moses Deen Matherton post office Ionia Co. Mich. Also to John Beels Lyons Ionia Co—

We have paid in the last year nearly \$20 from the 1st Presbyterian Chh. of Lyons & 2nd Cong'l Chh of Lyons & from the 1st Cong'l Chh of Portland—We have pledged \$30 which remainder will be forth coming, which will entitle us to one other. If you could consistently send a third copy to Mr. B. C. Cooley Deacon of the 1st Congregational Chh. of Portland I should like it as I think there will be nothing lost by so doing. It should be directed Portland Ionia Co Mich:—I might state we have also commenced to raise \$30 for the present year & have part of it pledged—

Yours truly

H. E. Waring

P.S. I remember my pleasant interview with you at the Missionary rooms last fall & your kindness etc. I presume you see so many you have but faint recollection of me—I occupy

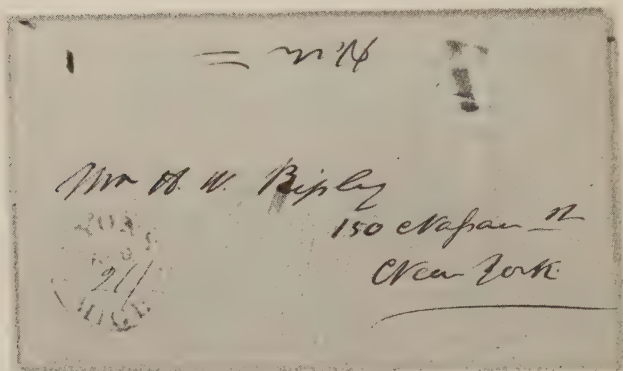
the place Br. L.M.S. Smith occupied—Mr. Smith enjoys comfortable health at present yet he does not feel warranted to give himself wholly to preaching although he does occasionally—He lives at Mill-point near the mouth of Grand River, some three miles above the mouth.

I hope you & your family are in the enjoyment of comfortable health, as I recollect that you did not enjoy very comfortable health last fall—I have been much benefitted by the daily use of the water bath especially a cold pouring or shower bath in the morning immediately after rising—I have not enjoyed such comfortable health for months as I now do—

I have not forgot the collection of some minerels etc for you: as one these days I hope to send you some specimens—give my love to all the dear brethren of the Board

Affectionately yours

H.E.W.



PHANNEL WARNER WARRINER

One of the missionaries to come to Michigan in territorial days was the Rev. Phannel Warner Warriner, usually referred to as P. W. Warriner. He was installed as the first pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Monroe in 1831, although the church had been organized several years earlier, in 1820, by the Rev. John Montieth of Detroit.

Warriner assisted the Rev. Ira M. Wead of Ypsilanti in a revival meeting in that village the same year he took over the Monroe church. Later he went to White Pigeon, and while serving the church there he added an endorsement to the application of the First Presbyterian Church of Coldwater for financial assistance from the American Home Missionary Society.

Warriner was also a member of the first board of trustees of Marshall College, Marshall, Michigan, of which institution John Payne Cleaveland was the first president.

One of the early histories tells an interesting story of the Rev. Charles W. Girney mentioned in the second letter. It appears that on his way to Sturgis, Girney stopped over at the Eagle Hotel in Cold Water (as the town was first spelled) and inquired as to whether or not there was a Presbyterian Church in the village. Upon learning that there was such a church he made arrangements to preach on the following Sunday and word was sent out through the village that there would be preaching at the red school house "come Sunday."

The people who attended the service liked Girney and arranged with him to share his time between their church and the Congregational Church of Union City. The letter from the Elders indicates that he served them well. Girney was not an ordained minister, but a blacksmith by trade, and considered himself quite unworthy of preaching. In fact, when a committee from the Cold Water church waited upon him in 1841 to invite him to be their stated preacher, he is said to have rebuked them for considering

him competent to accept that responsibility. He died later that year.

It would appear that the "Young man at the east" with whom the church had been corresponding did not come West, as the record does not show that this congregation had any regular preaching for three or four years after the date of the letter here reproduced.

The first letter bears the rare Monroe territorial postmark, in manuscript, while the Girney letter is postmarked with the circular townmark of Coldwater.

March 17, 1831

To Mr. A Peters

Rev'd & Dear Sir—

I should rejoice, were I able to communicate some intelligence from this place that would cheer, & gladden your heart, & convince you that your beneficence was not bestowed upon this people in vain. I have however nothing of this kind to write. I believe this church is in a far better state than when I first came. But by this I would not wish to be understood as saying that it is as it ought to be. It is far from this. You know something of its past history, & it has, without doubt, been a subject that you have wept over. Much labour, & much patience is required of the man who preaches to this people. I have, during the winter endeavoured, as far as I have been able, to awaken some feeling that should look like a revival amongst us. There have been times when I have been encouraged almost to hope that we were about to see better things. I trust the Lord has some people here, & that he will not let his church in this place become extinct. But a darkness hangs over us that is truly impenetrable by human eye. I feel that God will soon do something here, & I tremble when I think of it. We certainly have reason to fear his righteous judgments. The wickedness of this place is proverbial in the whole region around us. I need not however depict to you the dark prospects of this people. When I say to you we have revival, & nothing that looks like it, I say enough to solicit your prayers for us. These Sir, we need, & I say it, with a full belief that no one of your Missionaries can say it with more emphasis. Will you not mention our case before your Executive Committee, that when they meet to talk, & deliberate they may know

that one of their Missionaries, & one of the churches fostered by their bounty need their prayers.

We are making a great effort to build a church here this season; but one of the difficulties which have always existed in this place meets us in this effort, & threatens to defeat our object, viz. a want of union. I am happy to say that in this thing the church are unanimous. But without the co-operation of others the effort must fall.

Our encouragements are, that our meetings on the sabbath are well attended. The court house is crowded. Our evening meeting(s) are as well attended as they ever have been since I have been here. A determination seems to be manifested to have the stated ordinances of the Gospel with them, tho they are not seemingly benefited by them. There is evidently much more interest manifested in the benevolent enterprises of the day than there has formerly been. The Sabbath School flourishes, & the Bible class is not losing its interest. The people are becoming better informed on religious subjects. Our Tract Society is exerting a silent influence. We have adopted the plan of monthly distribution. All these things are encouraging so far as they go; & should the Lord pour out his Spirit among us, Monroe would be, to me, as pleasant a home as I could desire. Praying that the great head of the church would grant us his divine blessing, & your Society his constant smiles, I am

Dear Sir yours—

P. W. Warriner

(There then follows a chart, with detailed report, of members, etc.)

We have not organized a Domestic Missionary Society. The above sum (\$15.00) was raised as a donation to the Society. We shall have one formed when the people are ripe for it. Things have to move very gradually in this place, or they will not go at all. You know the past history of this church, & that accounts for this fact. The same is true of For. Miss. Society. The above amount (\$5) was a donation.

P.S. Mr. Peters I expect a box of clothing to be sent from Andover to your care. Will you have the goodness to examine the box, & to open it, if necessary to see if they are dry, & safe, & also to keep them in your charge until I send for them. If you will also have the goodness to pay the freight upon the box I

will send the money to you by the person who takes the box from you.

P. W. Warriner

* * * * *

Monroe, March 8, 1832.

Mr. Peters.

Dear Sir.

In my last I gave you some account of our four day's meeting. Since that time there has been an interesting state of things among us. There have been a few cases of hopeful conversions in our Society, & a large number among the Methodist. The Methodist held a quarterly meeting here in Dec. & continued for about six weeks, day, & night, & the most noise, & irregularity that I ever heard before. The meeting however was the means of some good, & of how much hurt I know not. In some instances it had a tendency to disaffect individuals towards the subject of religion very much. There are a number of cases of true conversion to God, I have no doubt, but not so many as they enumerate.

Several of those who have formerly given something towards my support have connected themselves with the Methodist Society. This together with the formation of an Episcopalian Society, has weaken our Society some. But we hope, & expect

*Monroe, La. 9
Mar 13*

25

*Rev. A. Peters
Care: Secy. A. F. M. S.
144. Nassau Street
N. York*

that the present season there will be an increase to our strength by emigration, & otherwise.

Notwithstanding the formation of a new Society, & the revival among the Methodist, our house has been crowded to overflowing, & sometimes individuals have been obliged to go away for the want of room in the house.

Our church, or Meeting-house is under good way, & will probably be done at the time specified (the first of June.) We have been in the habit of taking up collections at our Monthly concert, & I have now on hand about twenty two dollars. We shall raise the remainder of the fifty, & with your permission I will take this, & give your society credit for it. Will you please to write me & let me know, if I may retain it. This will save the expense of postage, & avoid the danger of losing it.

Since I last wrote you I have preached at Blissfield, & administered the Sacrament. Three were added to that little church by confession. They chose their Elders, & they were ordained. They need a minister very much, & I was in hopes that they would have had one last fall. Is there not a man that can supply that place, & Adrian? The wants of this Territory are becoming more, & more numerous. I most sincerely hope you will send us some additional labourers this spring. With sentiments of gratitude for your favours,

I am yours in the best of Bonds.

P. W. Warriner

Rev'd A. Peters.

(There then follows a neatly arranged statistical report, with blocked headings, giving the name of the church, Presbyterian Church Monroe, Additions; by Letter and By Confession; Hopeful conversions; S. Schools; Bible Classes; Temper. Societies; and the amount of money raised by the various groups of the church. Certain items are "keyed" to notes below:)

We have no Domestick, or Foreign Missionary Societies. The amount raised is taken up at Monthly concert. We have not yet made collections for our Tract Society this year.

There have been many more, than this number of conversions (28) among the Methodist, & in our own Society. Probably

double this number. I have put down only the number that have already joined our Society, or who intend to at our next communion.

I have mentioned all the schools in the county that I have formed (5), & which embrace all that are within the county. The exact number of schollars I do not know; we have eighty in the school in the village. I have put the number lower than it actually is.

* * * * *

Mishigan Coldwater June 7th 1838

Dear Sir

We have taken the liberty to make some few Statements to you and to ask som assistance from you We formed a Presbyterian Church in Coldwater the 30th of Sept'r last the Church was Organised by the Rev'd P W Warener of White Pigeon at its formation it consisted of 19 Members---In Nov'r following we employed the Rever'd Charles W Girney to preach with us one half the time for six months During which time there was something of a revival of religion in our place considerable additions were made to our church and to the Methodists and some to the Baptists—the largest proportion as to numbers and property belong to the Methodists society we are surrounded by More or less of almost all denominations in consequence of which we consider our situation a peculiar one and one that needs particular attention could we have regular preaching we think our church would grow and prosper and would soon through the blessing of God be able to support the Gospel without the assistance of your society or any other

We now number 53 Members—31 of which are Females and 22 are Males and among the 22 Males there are but 13 heads of Famalies and several of those unable to aid much if any in the support of the Gospel—But Dear brethren under all the disadvantages we have had to labour and the difficulties we have had to encounter the great head of the church has sustained and blessed us since our organisation and no doubt will continue to do so if we are faithful—we hope we feel willing to do what we can do but we are not able to support the Gospel for a year to come but could we obtain \$100 Dollars from your Society We think we could sustain a Minister among us for a year to come which we think all important for the prosperity

of this little Church and for building up of the cause of Christ
in this part of his Moral viniard—

Yours in the Lord

Luther Stiles)	Elders of the
)	First Presbyte-
James Smith)	rian Church
)	in Coldwater
)	Mishigan
)	

- - - - -

White Pigeon June 30. 1838

To the Secretaries of the A.H.M.S.

Dear Brethren—

The church at Cold Water Mich. has requested me to make a statement of their circumstances, & wants, & to solicit for them the aid which they have asked within. I believe their statement to be true, & it is very important, that they have the ordinances of the gospel among them. But for this purpose they are able to raise only \$200. dollars. They have had correspondence with a Young man at the east & hope to secure his services, if they can obtain \$100. from your society. His name I have now forgotten. If he should come, & prove to be worthy of your patronage I will stand pledged that you shall be informed. I hope your committee will be able, & think it proper to grant their request.

With much respect I am yours etc

P. W. Warriner

IRA MASON WEAD

One of the earliest missionaries to come to Michigan was the Rev. Ira Mason Wead, of Ypsilanti. It would appear that Wead had a rather definite assignment before he left the East, and was assured of the Ypsilanti church as his first charge.

Ira Mason Wead was born in Vermont in 1804. After graduating from the University of Vermont he took up the study of law, but gave that up and entered Andover Theological Seminary, from which he was graduated in 1829. He married soon thereafter, and, with his bride, set out for Michigan, reaching Ypsilanti in June of 1830.

The Rev. Mr. Wead became the regular minister of the Ypsilanti church in 1830. While the name of the church was later changed to the Ypsilanti Congregational Church, it remained under the control of the Presbytery. Wead left this church in 1847, but later returned to Ypsilanti, where he died in 1871, at the age of 67 years.

We reproduce four communications bearing the signature of Wead. The earliest is his report to Mr. James Allen, County Clerk, of the marriages he had performed during the first few months of 1832.

Three full-length letters from Wead are included in the group, together with an extended endorsement of an application from the Presbyterian Society of Howell. In this last letter the object of their interest was the Rev. Henry Root. Root was a Congregational minister, a New Englander, having been born in Canaan, and trained at the Auburn Theological Seminary. He served pastorates in Grandville and Lyons, and from 1851 until 1857 was the minister of the Congregational Church of Portland.

The marriage report, above mentioned, was directed to James F. Allen, the Washtenaw County Clerk, and brother of postmaster John Allen. John Allen and Elisha Rumsey founded the Ann Arbor settlement. The name of the wife of each of these men was "Ann" and it was in honor of these two ladies that the town was named Ann's Arbour, then Ann Arbour and finally Ann Arbor.

The first two letters bear the manuscript marking of Ypsilanti, both being territorial letters. The last two are handstamped with the circular townmark of the Ypsilanti post office.

Because some of the histories of early Michigan, together with the records of the Presbyterian Church in Michigan, show the Rev. Mr. Wead's surname as being spelled W-e-e-d, we illustrate his signature, as affixed to two of his letters, showing the manner in which he himself spelled his name.

Other neighborhood where a
ad any -
Sincerely Yours
W. Wead

I would that you
you did with Mr.
Grant his request
to it, Mr. Wead. He
lady.
in the future
J. M. Wead

Mr. Allen

D Sir---

This certifies that on the 5th of January A.D. 1832 at 1/2 past 3 oclock P.M. I solemnized the rites of marriage between Uzal Williams & Mabel McMath.

Also on January 11 1832 at 1/2 past 1 oclock P.M. between Isaac Sines & Nancy Karr.

Also, on March 14th A.D. 1832 at 7 oclock P.M. between David Terhune & Lucy Ann Jewel

Also, on March 22, at 7 oclock P.M. between David Bird & Nancy Lincoln-

Also, April 5th 1832 at 7 oclock P.M. between Charles M. Maynard & Sophronia Colton.

Also, on April 12th at 11 oclock A.M. between John Lawrence & Mary Ann Leonard-

Also on April 26th 1832 at 4 oclock P.M. between John Ackerson & Elvsa Smith-

Also on May 1st 1832 at 8 oclock P.M. between Sudnet Smith & Abigail Hayes-

Also on May 2nd 1832 at 3 oclock P.M. between William McNair & Elizabeth Robertson-

Attest I.M. Wead
Minister of the Gospel

I have the impression that I reported the two first couple on a former occasion. If I have not done it Mr. Allen will oblige.

Respectfully

I. M. Wead

Jas. F. Allen
County Clerk

* * * * *

To the Cor. Sec. A.H.M.S.

Dear Sir,

Two quarters of my third year ended on the first of January last. I have not reported either because I have had no notice that my commission has been renewed. Your committee for this Territory at Detroit, N. M. Wells & E. P. Hastings, instructed me a few days since to make out my report to you, presuming that their communication recommending a renewal of my commission, had been over-looked. I regretted that our Society was necessitated to make application for assistance this year. But after strenuous exertions they could raise only \$300, which is \$50. in advance of what they raised the year previous. On account of sickness & other things my expences are greater this year than usual. I am much in debt, & in consequence of not receiving returns from you have not been able to fulfil my contracts. Whether your Board intend renewing my commission or not it would relieve me from a state of suspense to hear.

Notwithstanding my embarassments in pecuniary matters, the Lord has blessed us some what in spiritual things.

During the first quarter which commenced the first of July, there was nothing particularly interesting. Yet there was not that degree of coldness which sometimes prevails. Our place of worship on the Sabbath was crowded & to a good degree solemn. During the quarter six were rec'd by letter from other churches. The cause of Sabbath Schools flourished as also that of Temperance.

During the second quarter which commenced the first of Oct. our religious prospects were more interesting. After our communion in October our church became more awake to the interests of Zion. A protracted meeting was appointed which was holden in November. It continued five days. As the result of that meeting seven have become connected with the church & several more indulged the hopes of salvation through Christ. On the Sabbath we still have a crowded & solemn house; and at my lectures in different neighborhoods during the week there is a good attendance & most fixed attention. I can not but hope from these appearances that the fallow ground is here breaking up & that at no distant day we shall witness an abundant harvest of souls.

Epistle to H B
Jan 25

25

Rev. Absalom Peters
Cor. Sec. of the A. A. M. S.
150 Nassau Street

Single

New York

Our people now have it in contemplation to build a place of worship the ensuing summer. They wish to build large enough to supply our future wants. Such a house would cost not far from \$3000. We are not able to raise more than half of this sum. Did some of our wealthy friends know our circumstances I believe that they would see that they can now effectually promote the interests of Zion by giving us some aid for this object.

We greatly need more labours (labourers) in this interesting field. In Saline, a town in this county, there is a church of about forty, crying for the bread of life.

I preached one evening a few weeks since in Clinton, a flourishing little village about 12 miles beyond Saline. There were a few professors present who with deep & solemn feeling renewed their covenant vows, & promised to labor & pray for a revival. An opportunity was then given for any one who wished the prayers of Christians to manifest their desire by rising. Some 6 or 8 immediately arose. Since then a two days meeting has been holden & a church formed. About 20 have since indulged hopes of a saving change. These two places are already white for the harvest. They greatly need a minister. They could raise for his support probably about \$300. Can you not send one.

I could mention several other places in this vicinity where they need help, but knowing the numerous calls which you have I forbear.

Wishing you & the Society which you represent increased success I subscribe myself

Your friend & bro. in Christ

Ira M. Wead

* * * * *

Rev. & Dear Sir

I have just closed my sixth year of labor in this place during the whole of which time your Society has generously extended aid to this congregation for my support. For this I trust they are truly grateful, and I hope their gratitude, during this or the next month, will be manifested by a liberal contribution to the funds of your Society. I do not expect that they will be disposed to ask aid another year, if they do, it will not be with my consent. The church without practicing a very great amount of self denial can support the gospel now without receiving a farthing from the world or from your society. True they are subjecting themselves to a pretty heavy tax in their efforts to complete our meeting house, but still I am persuaded they can do the whole besides contributing liberally to the various benevolent objects and be none the poorer, at the close of the year.

To ourselves, the history of this church is peculiarly interesting. In June 1829 it was organized by Rev. Mr. Page now laboring in the state as your agent. A number just equal to that of the Apostles, entered into covenant with one another and with God. They were scattered in the country around. Wickedness prevailed; in the village it triumphed. The original settlers were those who knew no Sabbath and practically at least knew no God. About a year from the organization of the church in much manifest young and inexperienced, I commenced my labors. The church then embraced thirty eight—but they were scattered over such an extent of territory as rendered their influence scarcely perceptible. The tide of opposition to the truth soon rose high, and threats of personal violence were dealt out with an unsparing hand. At the close of my first year however the church had received an accession of eleven. The Second year the Lord poured out his Spirit; and 48 new added to the church. The third year we also had a refreshing season, and twenty five were rec'd into communion. The fourth year gave us an accession of thirty one. During my fifth year we had something of a revival, and twenty became connected with

the church. It was during the year just closed, that the Lord opened wider the windows of heaven and poured us out a blessing, not till there was not room to receive it, but beyond our expectations. Sixty nine were received into fellowship making in the whole received during my six years labor here 213. Fifty four have been dismissed & 14 died, leaving at the present time connected with the church 184—

Our meetinghouse is expected to be completed by the first of Sept. In consequence of the terrible freshet we had early in the Spring we have been unable to get lumber to have it finished at an earlier period. It is expected that our strength will be much increased the day we are permitted to enter it.

With our increasing strength there seems to be an increasing Spirit of benevolence. Last month our Society raised something more than one hundred Dolls. for Foreign Missions.

It is thought that the Temperance cause in this new state* is receiving an impulse. Teetotalism is the doctrine that prevails. We have a society here formed on that principle embracing more than 100 members; and we have an accession to our number at every meeting. The old Society has become defunct.

If you will allow me, I will make a suggestion in regard to increasing the number of your committee of correspondence—so as to have a committee of two or three within the bounds of each of the three presbyteries in the state. We all have confidence in your present committee, but it is plain that each presbytery will best know its own destitution and own ministers. Some ministers have received aid from your Society who probably would not have been recommended by a committee of the presbytery in the bounds of which they live.

Some of the brethren from the presbyteries have mentioned that they thought the above suggestion w'd be a desirable arrangement. I however cheerfully leave the subject to the Superior Wisdom of your Board.

Affectionately & truly your fellow laborer

I. M. Wead

Ypsilanti Michigan
20 July 1836

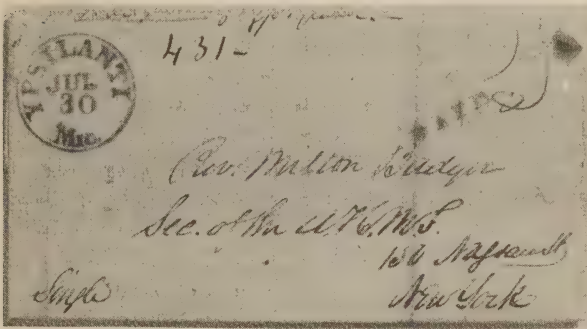
*Michigan became a state in 1837, but some historians still argue for the 1835 date.

Howell July 26th, 1839

To the board of the Am. Ho. Miss. Soc. N. York.

Gentlemen:

The undersigned Trustees of the first presbyterian Soc of Howell Livingston Co. Mich. request aid in the support of the gospel. It is now a little better than one year since the church in this place was organised being the second church organised in this county, and in connection with a neighboring church has sustained during the past year the first and only presbyterian minister that has been located in this Co—Considering the relative importance of the place, being the county seat, and the



increased demand for preaching of our own denomination we determined upon the expiration of the first year to sustain preaching all of the time and to establish among us a settled ministry. This we have done in reliance upon aid from your society. In addition to the support of the gospel we are erecting a house of worship. Although the preaching of the gospel among us the passed year has been answered in the conversion of sinners and the increase of our members, yet considering still our feebleness & that we are all beginners in a new country it seems to us utterly impracticable to sustain the gospel among us without at least assistance to the amount of one hundred dollars.

Our minister is the Rev. Henry Root who we expect will soon become our Pastor having been called by us to this rela-

tion.—The amount pledged by us for his support is three hundred dollars as this amount we are to raise.

W. A. Glover	)	Trustees
E. F. Guy	)	of said
Wm McPherson	)	Society

* * * * *

Ypsilanti July 30, 1839—

To the Ex. Com. A.H.M.S.

Dear Brethren,

I most heartily endorse the above application. Considering their circumstances that Society are doing nobly. The place is one of growing importance and a missionary should be sustained there if they needed twice the amount for which they have asked. Br. Root who has been in your employment before, has been since he had been in the state a persevering and successful laborer. I don't think he can live as he ought on \$400. But I think the Society have pledged all they are able to pay. If you could consistently give fifty dollars more than they ask for I have no doubt it would be well expended. Br. R. is a member of our presbytery and highly esteemed by all.

One word in regard to the application of aid from Hamburg which I forwarded a few days since. Br. Root who labored there half of the time the past year thinks that, that Society ought to raise \$300. if they have the entire services of a minister, and that they ought to apply for only \$100. It is a place of much less importance than Howell, but the Society is more able. They might unite with Kensington Church and I think ought to do so. This is Br. Root's opinion. He is much better acquainted there than I am & of course better able to judge correctly. At any rate from what I have learned since I forwarded the application it would not be best to appropriate to their use over 100. Dollars unless their missionary should preach in destitute settlements as I suggested.

As to Br. Badgers enquiry respecting Mr. Hoyt and the church at Salem, I did not hear that Mr. H. had left Salem until the receipt of his letter. With the causes of his leaving I am unacquainted. For a few months previous rumors have reached me that he denied the special Agency of the Spirit,

but I hear nothing so definite as to justify me in seeking a interview with him. Mr. H. has never been connected with any ecclesiastical body in the state unless he has done it quite recently. He received his Theological education at Oberlin.

I would recommend that you take the same course with him that you did with Mr. Hopkins of Sylvan, viz, that you grant his request when he becomes connected with Detroit presbytery. He is now within the bounds of that body.

Your fellow laborer in the Gospel

I. M. Wead

* * * * *

Ypsilanti Sept. 20. 1843

Br. Hall,

Your letter of the 13th inst. making enquiries respecting Mr. X, was received yesterday. I feel it to be a delicate matter to answer your letter as my impressions may have been altogether erroneous, and expressed, may do Mr. X great injustice. I do not therefore wish your decision in the case to be founded on what I shall say.

Mr. X spent some three or four days in my family, and preached for me on the Sabbath. I was much pleased with his Spirit. His piety seemed to be elevated and his views on theological subjects tolerably clear & discriminating. But after all, there was a lack of something that made the impression on my mind that he was not exactly the man for the West. Yet I encouraged his going to some place & make a trial. My people were not particularly interested in his preaching. But his effort may not have been a fair specimen. He had been travelling and preached extempore, having left his manuscript in Detroit.

You asked for my impressions and I have given them, but as I said before they may be very erroneous. I should much regret it if I were to prevent any brother, who would be useful, from coming west. A part of the field I occupy much needs a man. There is a small village containing some 300 inhabitants about five miles below this on the river, surrounded by quite a large population, where a minister ought to be stationed. A church of about 30 members might at once be gathered. Most of them now belong to my church, but they would be much bet-

ter accomodated there. But few can attend regularly on my preaching. They however are able to do but little towards the support of a man. There is another point about seven miles from this, where a church from fifteen to twenty might be gathered. Some eight or ten of them now belong to my church. This point is about seven or eight miles from the other one mentioned, so that they both could be supplied by the same man. I should judge that both places the first year would not be able to raise over some 150 or to the extent not over 200 dolls. If you could send a man and sustain him a year or two I think flourishing churches might be built up at both of these points, especially at the former. A man, to succeed in these places must not be outdone by a common Methodist preacher. The Methodists have small churches in both these places and preach one half the day every other Sabbath. I would like much to see these posts manned.

Have you yet obtained a man for Owosso Shiawassee County? I heard from there some six weeks since. They were then destitute.

You enquire after my health. It has been better the past summer than any previous summer since I have been in Michigan.

As you feel an interest in the churches you formerly aided, you may like to hear a word in regard to my own church and Society. During the latter part of last winter we enjoyed something of a revival which has resulted in the addition of some twenty five to our number. A new interest was also waked up in the affairs of our Society which has resulted in expending something like 800.00 Dolls. in improving our Meeting house and purchasing an excellent organ. Their pledge for the Foreign Missionary Society has also exceeded that of any previous year. I intend soon to present the claims of the A.H.M.S., and I hope they will do more for that than ever before.

But I am spinning out this letter to an unreasonable length. Please excuse me.

Very Truly Yours

I. M. Wead

ALBERT A WORTHINGTON

One of the very few letters postmarked at Brownstown in territorial days is the one written by the Rev. Albert A. Worthington while a missionary in the communities of Brownstown and Nankin, in which latter community he made his residence. But he did not confine his activities to those two communities. The Panama Church to which he refers was in Washtenaw County, the present townships of Salem and Superior in that county having been originally named Panama Township.

Worthington also mentions a contemplated trip "on the morrow" to organize a church at Whiteford. Whiteford is now in Lucas County, Ohio, but at the time of Worthington's letter it was located in Monroe County, Michigan. It was located in that strip of disputed territory that was later given to Ohio in exchange for the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, following the affair known as the Toledo War.

One of the most interesting details of the letter, however, is the date-line, "Smooth Rock in Brownstown." It was not until many years after this letter was written, in 1872, that the name of this village was changed from Brownstown to Flat Rock, which it still remains. Yet the Rev. Mr. Worthington apparently had used the name of the village then current in the area, Smooth Rock.

This letter presents a rather intimate story of life as it was lived in those days. The "chill fever" or ague that plagued the early settlers in many parts of the territory, was a form of malaria. It posed a constant threat to the Michigan pioneers.

This letter is postmarked at Brownstown, the early name of the village we know today as Flat Rock. The story of how Brownstown was named makes interesting reading in itself. The cover is a rare philatelic item.

Smooth Rock In Brownstown Nov 3rd

Dear Sir

The period of missionary labour embraced in my commis-

Brownston
Cov 4th MS

25

Rev. Absalom - Peters

No 150. Nassau - Street
New - York city
State of New York

sion has now terminated—and in taking a retrospective view of the past year I find there is cause for joy and grief; joy, for what the Lord has done in pouring out his Spirit on this field as well as Nankin: and grief for my unfaithfulness in not accomplishing a greater amount of good. Since my last quarterly letter nothing of special interest has occurred. I have been on a visit to my mother and relatives at the east in Cooperstown and other places; almost 2 months; and my health is some better. You have doubtless heard of the sickness and mortality which has visited so many places in this Territory. This place has shared with others. There have been several deaths here by the chill fever—one man, the head of an interesting family a member of our church died, and almost all men, women and children have had a course of the chill fever—I arrived here when the sickness was somewhat abating, but our meetings were quite thin for some time and the sabbath school suspended, but is now in operation. The monthly tract distribution is still continued, the monthly concert attended, and 2 weekly prayer meetings, Sabbath evening and Wednesday. There appears to be a waking up on the part of some of the members of the church of unfaithfulness by almost all the male members present and then a man arose and expressed a deep anxiety for his soul and fell on his knees and prayed earnestly for mercy—We trust he will come out a decided Christian—The members of the church continue steadfast, and the advocates of temperance also. As it respects Nankin the state of Religion is quite low—Though there are still amid the general gloom—some few who mourn over the desolation of Zion—And wherever I go, I generally meet with a few such Christians who in times of prevailing stupidity, continue faithful—This is cheering to the heart of a minister. This church has nearly doubled in numbers since the commencement of my labours---but there is a great defi-

ciency among the male members in point of efficient action. The female members I have found my best spiritual helpers. The members of the church live considerably scattered, and when there is no preaching they generally assemble on the Sabbath and read a sermon—

There is however a prayer meeting on Wednesday in one part of the society—The cause of temperance has here languished. I preached a few Sabbaths—in Panama church and I hope some good was done. There is a considerable church there—of 44 members—and some of the members quite active ---As I have been absent 7 weeks at the east—and have preached a few times in another church—I shall reckon only 9 months of missionary labours the past year—I have received 150 Dollars for the 2 years and the money I have received from the people has been but little—Besides paying for my board and house keeping in Nankin, I have received about 12 dollars—and between 20 & 30 here—But I have as yet no family—I feel myself greatly indebted to your society, without whose aid I dont know how I or my brethren here in the field could be supported in these feeble churches—It will probably be many years before some of these churches will be able to support a minister without aid from your Society—I am still of the opinion which I have before expressed to you that circuits which would give preaching once in 2 weeks to those feeble churches are very desirable in many parts of this new country—I would not advocate the methods adopted by our Methodist brethren however in selecting so large a field of labour—but let there be 2 ministers as colleagues—on the circuit, and when an impression is made on the minds of the people they could be mutual assistants---With regard to my field of labour I shall not remain in Nankin, though I may occasionally preach there. I shall continue my labours in this place for a season—and as there is no presbyterian minister in Monroe county adjoining this, I shall probably labour there in connection with this place.

To morrow I intend to go a distance of 45 miles to organise a presbyterian church in Whiteford a new town in Monroe county. I shall not apply for another commission yet and I may not apply at all for this year—as my plan or course of labour probably would not meet the approbation of your Society—May God prosper all your endeavours to do good—

I remain yours affectionately

Albert Worthington

Dr Sir

The Presbyterian Church of Orion and Independance considering our destitute and needy situation pray for aid from the American H.M. Society. We procured the Services of Rev. W. Barber of Rochester Mich to come & organize our church in March last—when there were thirteen added by letter and one by profession of Faith. Since then we have extended the borders of the church and it now embraces about 20 members and several wish as soon as convenient to unite by letter. The average number of attendants are from Eighty to one hundred. We have succ'd as we trust in procuring the services of Rev. Albert Worthington with us and are designing to raise amongst us the Sum of One Hundred and fifty Dollars for his services for one year. Considering the situation of our minister and church we ask and humbly ask from the Society as least one hundred Dollars and more if it is consistent at all with the Society. We are well aware of the embarrassed state of the Society but looking at what might be the blessed results of the Labors of an Evangelical Minister with us we with confidence thus ask his Labors will be expended in four towns to gather up the wandering sheep and to preach & otherwise Labor to bring the Impenitent to a knowledge of the truth. Some interest already appears to be felt—so help us—

Yours with the kindest Respect

Philip Losey
Thomas Beardslee

* * * * *

Pontiac Sept. 7—1840

Dear Brother,

The field for which aid is here solicited is an important one & where the people have great need of assistance from your Society.

Brother Worthington is a devoted Servant of the Lord Jesus & the people feel anxious to enjoy his ministrations. If you can grant their request, I think your benefaction will be bestowed with a fair prospect of doing much good. One hundred

dollars I know is the sum usually granted; but if in this case you can bestow \$50 for the current year it will be well applied.

Yours in the bonds of the Gospel

Isaac W. Ruggles

* * * * *

Dear Brother —

Through the goodness of God I have recently resumed the labours of the Ministry, after a suspension of them for a year owing to the feeble state of my health. My family as well as myself have been greatly afflicted with sickness, so that it has been with great difficulty and with the most rigid economy that we have gained a subsistence. When I consider my embarrassed condition, being involved in debt to the amount of \$350, with a feeble wife, two little children, the great importance of the field which I now occupy, and the prospects it presents for usefulness I think your benefactions will not be unprofitably bestowed. This people will not be able to raise for me but a few dollars in money. I have recently purchased a horse with a credit of only four months with the expectation of receiving aid from your Society; and if my expectations are not realised, I shall not be able to pay for my horse which is so much needed for this extensive field of labour. Besides preaching in Independence I am labouring a part of the time in an adjoining town, Springfield, where I shall probably organize a presbyterian church. It will be a favour if you would date the commission if granted as commencing with the time of my entering this field which was the last Sabbath of July 1840. for the towns of Springfield and Independence. I am for the present residing in Milford Oakland Co. owing to the want of a house to live in in my field of labour. If you send the commission, please direct it there. Springfield and Independence are in Oakland Co.

Unsigned, but apparently written by the Rev. Worthington mentioned in the letter itself.

MISCELLANY

It was not intended that this should be a history of the Presbyterian Church in Michigan, nor a complete record of the work of all missionaries laboring here. It was hoped, rather, that by reproducing the letters from a representative number of these pioneer preachers that we might gather some ideas as to their work, their problems, and their hopes and aspirations for our early residents. These letters not only present quite graphically their problems, but the manner in which these problems were met.

A few miscellaneous items are included here because they throw additional light on the missionary enterprise in the early days of our state.

The first Presbyterian minister to come to Michigan was the Rev. John Montieth, who arrived in 1816 and concerning whom an entire volume could be written, so extensive was his work and his achievements. Because of his prominence, and because we have no letter written by him, we thought it proper to include in this work some notes from his diary, the original of which is in the Michigan Historical Collections in Ann Arbor. One of his diary entries is entitled "The Introduction of the Gospel into Michigan," and we copy such entry later in this chapter.

There were also many laymen who were sincerely interested in the religious life of the early settlers. Some of their appeals for help are shown in postscripts to letters already reproduced herein. A few others are shown in this chapter. Without the encouragement and assistance of these laymen the lot of the missionary would have been even more arduous than it was.

(a) From Diary of John Montieth, 1817

"The Introduction of the Gospel into Michigan.

It was about the close of October 1817 that the Rev. Sylvester Larned came to visit his brothers in Detroit. He is the 1st Presbn preacher who had visited me in this place. It was grateful to see such a Brother & especially a fellow student from our Theological Seminary, & withal one who is already introduced here by having Brothers & old neighborhood friends

already on the ground to give him a cordial reception. This Brother arrived on the 27th. It afforded a good opportunity to aid me in public services. The remains of Lieut. Brooks have just arrived to be interred which was done in military style on the 31st.

The next Sab. the 2nd Nov. was the time designated for our 1st Communion & the first administration of that ordinance of protestants in Michigan or in the English language in this place. I am glad (he) was to add to the notoriety of the event, as well as to aid me in these important services & to stir up my own affections by his spiritual services.

A ch. has not been formally organized. We have no local officers. There has been no special meeting of the friends of C to recognize each other. I am some what acquainted with the few who would be disposed to make a profession at this time. It is about a year & four months since I commenced my labors here. And whilst we have witnessed few instances of a striking conversion; there is a general seriousness in the community, there are four who have been communicants in Evangelical churches & two who have satisfied me that they ought to be admitted to this ordinance. We number 8 in all, including Br. Larned & myself. The arrangement was thus. I preach the previous sermon, Br. L. states the nature, design & proper subjects of the Institution. I consecrate & administer. He performs the concluding exercises. He also preaches in the P.M.

Larned remains over another Sab. & preaches twice on that day. He is on his way to N. Orleans as a pioneer & missionary. On Monday the 10 Nov. I accompany him on his departure to Spring Wells & commit him to the grace of our common Lord."

(b) Eurotas P. Hastings was a very prominent banker and Presbyterian layman in Detroit in the early part of the 19th century. There are many references to him in the letters reproduced in this work. He made at least one extended trip in territorial days to the "Western counties" of Michigan and makes an interesting report of that trip. Poor roads, swollen streams and rivers, uncertain accommodations, these all made travel in those early days a real problem.

The "Rev'd Mr. Pierce" whom Hastings mentions in his letter is the Rev. John D. Pierce, often referred to as the "father of the public school system of Michigan."

* * * * *

Dear Sir,

I have recently returned from a tour through the Western counties & having visited several of the stations occupied by your Missionaries and ascertained the (condition) of other places I proceed to trouble you with the following detail.

Rev'd Mr. Pierce did not reach his place of destination last fall. He expected a colony to follow him and settle with him 12 Miles beyond Calhoun centre. The families did not reach and he took up a temporary residence at the centre with the design of preaching at Jacksonburgh & other places in Calhoun & Kalamazoo Counties.

The Streams being open and not bridged—he has preached only at Jacksonb'g & Calhoun. The population is sparse, the people poor & provisions high & scarce. We think he will not be able to sustain himself & family without an appropriation of 200\$. I have paid his dft for 100\$ which please honor when it reaches you.

The people of Gull Prairie Kalamazoo generally are dissatisfied with Mr.----- & have requested Mr. Pierce to devote a portion of his time to that place. We have requested Mr. P. to visit them and to use his exertions to restore Mr.-----but if he should fail in the attempt to report the facts to us. It was my intention to have visited the station but owing to the situation of the Rivers I was forced to abandon the project. Mr.----- preaches at Kalamazoo centre at Eldreds Mills & at one other station---I have pd his dft on you for 25\$. At Prairie Round in Kalamazoo Co. there are 300 families within an area of 15 miles. This place has never been visited by a clergyman of our Denomination. One is much needed and I think there is a prospect of forming a Strong Soc. at this place.

Rev'd Mr. Humphrey has an extensive field in Cass Co. & is doing good.

The Missionary of the Genl. Assembly, Mr. Sears, who is stationed at White Pigeon Prairie I think will leave in the Spring. He has been sick several months—is somewhat advanced in life—has a large Family at Balston (?) & has found fatigues of travelling in a new country too much for him to endure.

Here is an interesting field. There are several intelligent & wealthy professors of Religion settled around the Prairie. The Land office is located here and there is a prospect of a

considerable accession to the population early in the Spring. We think it very desirable to supply these two places with efficient men early in the Spring

Rev'd Mr. Wead has rec'd a call to Hudson, Ohio. Should he accept this will add another to list furnished you in our last communication.

Yours with respect

E. P. Hastings

Mr. Wells concurs in the above. It is inconvenient to obtain his signature at present.

* * * * *

(c) Layman Chester Pratt reports for his brethren of the Salem church in Washtenaw County respecting the discharge of the missionary who was laboring in that community. That these early settlers were serious in their theology is well indicated by this letter, which is enlightening in respect to the extent to which some of the congregations censured the theology of their ministers. It was quite properly a matter of deep concern to these sincere people, and a notation on the back of this particular letter, obviously made at the home office in New York, is to the effect that "Rev. Mr. X has left Salem." For reasons that can be well understood we have deleted the name of the missionary whose theology was questioned, as we find him mentioned elsewhere in these pages, and he had a successful and honorable career in the ministry of our state.

The letter, though date-lined at Salem, was mailed from the Ypsilanti post office, and bears the red circular handstamp marking of that office. It is addressed to "Rev. J. J. Murry" at Geneva, N. Y.

* * * * *

Salem June 17th 1839

Dear Sir

I will inform you and through you your society that we have discontinued the labors of the Revd X who was commissioned by your Society to labor with us one year, our reasons for so

doing was that of his changing his views of the doctrins of the gospel; the doctrin of total depravity he held to be committing actual sin That mankind were neither naturally nor constitutionally sinners, that they cum in to the world neither sinfull nor holy, possessing no moral character, that repentance and regeneration was only a change of conduct and that regeneration was effected only by the adaptation of the means of grace without the influences of the holy spirit and lastly denied the personality of the Trinity, he only admitted one God acting in three offices, their consequences of which we felt it our duty to discontinue his labors with us freely (feeling) that we shall sand (stand) justified by your society the time that he labored with us was seven months.

Chester Pratt

Salem Michigan

* * * * *

(d) We reproduce another letter from a layman, this time an Army doctor, Dr. R. S. Satterlee. Satterlee is mentioned in some of the histories as being interested in the Presbyterian Church at the fort at Mackinac as early as 1828. He was later transferred to Fort Howard, near Navarino, now in Wisconsin but at that time a part of Michigan Territory. It was while stationed at Fort Howard that he writes the following letter.

After service at Fort Howard he was transferred to Newport, R. I., as I find in my general collection of covers two letters addressed to a "Mrs. W. Truesdail, in care of Dr. R. S. Satterlee, U. S. Army" at the Newport address, both from Detroit. Wesley Truesdail himself was a prominent banker and business man of Detroit, a member of the Brady Guards, and particularly interested in boats and yachting. Whether Mrs. Truesdail was related to the Satterlee family, or merely a friend, does not appear from available records.

We illustrate the cover, as it bears the very rare manuscript postmark of the Navarino post office.

* * * * *

Page 25 Navarino M. C.
Mar 31.
Rev. Abner Peters D.D.
Corresponding Secretary of the
American Home Mission Society
New York

Fort Howard near Navarino
Green Bay M. T.
15th March 1834

My Dear Sir,

I have thought proper (for from that in the multiplicity of your engagements, and the many applications that are made to you, for assistance you might forget us here in this benighted corner of the world) to address you again on the subject of a minister for this Post. is there not some way by which we can obtain a man suited to our wants. we are able, and I believe willing, to support him (that is if his expectations are moderate) I am not afraid to warrant three hundred dollars a year and I think four hundred might be obtained if necessary. there are several professing Christians here, both among the officers and their families and among the soldiers, and others attached to the Army in other capacities, and all very anxious to have a minister, and willing to do what they can to support him.

The Cause of Temperance is prospering here. We have a Society consisting of more than seventy members and good order now prevails in the Garrison.—We have a meeting morning and evening on the Sabbath, both well attended when a sermon is made, with prayer singing, and reading the Scriptures, also a Prayer meeting one evening in each week, but we very much want the direction and assistance of a good faithful min-

ister. indeed it seems as though we could not do without one, is it possible there is none for us,

There is a wide field here, besides the Garrison, Satan and sin are making fearful ravages all around with none to oppose. The Protestant Episcopal Missionary at Green Bay did for a time preach half of each Sabbath at Navarino, a little Villiage opposite this Fort, but on account of some difficulty between the citizens and the Mission, he has thought proper to discontinue his labor there, so that now, we have no preaching at all.

Where are the young men that year after year are graduating from the Theological Seminaries. We hear of numbers of them, that when they graduate are determined to go to the destitute places in the for. nests and on our wide spread borders, and what is the Christian community doing, can it be said that they are doing their duty, when our little Army is almost entirely neglected. is it probable that if Christians remembered us, in the social meeting, at the family altar, and in the closet, as they ought, that God would not find out some means of having the Gospel of his own son preached even to us,

In our Temperance efforts we have as we think sufficiently tried the vine, and Beer drinking means, of reforming drunkards, and have satisfied ourselves that at least for the Army, that Society that does not exclude all intoxicating drinks, spirituous, vinous, or fermented, will do but little good.

We should be glad to hear from you soon, and we hope your efforts to procure a minister for us will be successful.

I am dear Sir yours in Christian affection

R. S. Satterlee

Br. Absalom Peters, D. D.

B. Mrs. Satterlee sends her regards to you.

* * * * *

(e) We can offer very little more about Cutting Marshe than that furnished by his letter. He was serving as a missionary to the Stockbridge Indians at "Statesburg near Green Bay" in what was then Michigan Territory but which is now in Wisconsin. The letter was mailed from the post office of Grand Cakalin, Michigan Territory, on March 16, 1835, and is one of the few covers bearing that rare postmark. His qualified recommendation of the Rev. Abel L. Bashet, and his urgent appeal for aid from the American Home Missionary Society, reflect the great

scarcity of missionaries in the developing West. His concern for the officers and soldiers of the Fort coincides with the opinion expressed by Dr. Satterlee in the letter just preceding this letter from Mr. Marshe.

Cutting Marshe was also the postmaster of the Grand Cakalin office, as the letter itself bears his frank as postmaster.

To Rev. Absalom Peters
Cor. Sec. A.H.M. Soc.
City of N. York

Dear Sir:

I take the liberty to address you and recommend to your Soc. the Rev. Abel L. Bashet, now at Green Bay. Mr. B. a year ago last fall was sent out to Mackinaw by the Hon. Board, with the expectation of establishing a new Mission amongst some Indians at a place called the Grand Traverse, but for various reasons the object was never accomplished by the Board.

Last Summer Mr B. came to this Mission by the advice of Rev Mr. Ferry the Supt. of the Mission at Mackinaw, as the state of his health, etc seemed to require it. The change was favorable and he was able to preach most of the time---

His connexion with the Mission amongst the Stockbridge Indians closed about the first of Feb. as then the premises were abandoned which had formerly been owned by the Board, and relinquished upon payt. being received for the same to the U.S.

Mr B's talents are respectable and his sermons above mediocrity for one who has been situated as he has been, not having gone thro. with a regular theological course of studies at any Sem. and but about 2 years if I mistake not since he was licensed. He now preaches occasionally at Fort Howard, but his labors are not needed there for the place was pre-occupied by a Methodist Missionary. He has spent a few weeks at Fort Winnebago during the winter, but he is not calculated to suit the feelings etc of Military men. His sphere of greatest usefulness will be amongst plain, country people, who do not require a great Degree of refinement in manners and who are abundantly satisfied with "the sincere milk of the word." If Sir, you have any such place either in the Penninsula of Mich. or the northern part of Illinois I have no doubt but Mr. B. would be a useful

minister to such a people provided he enjoyed good health---
At the opening of Navigation he intends to go with his family to
Chicago.

I would still plead with your Soc. for a remembrance of
Fort Winnebago. The fore part of Feb. having received an in-
vitation I went there for the purpose of organizing a church
amongst the soldiers in the Fort. It was indeed an interesting
season; every kindness was shown me on the part of the officers
belonging to the Fort during my stay which was two Sabbaths,
and very serious and solemn attention paid to the preaching of
the word, and generally a very considerable of a number were
present.

A day of fasting & prayer was set apart for this object and
for the purpose also of attending to the formation of a church.
On this occasion eleven came forward and were examined,
some however had been members of churches previously, but
a majority of them indulge the hope that they have passed from
death unto life within a few months past. These having ex-
pressed a strong desire to be formed into a church and having
given satisfactory evidence of personal piety entered into
solemn covenant with God and each other to walk in all his
statutes and ordinances blameless. Six if I mistake not re-
ceived the ordinance of baptism, and on the following Sab. this
little, precious band sat down at the table of our common Lord
and Master, and commemorated his dying love. The Surgeons
belonging to the Post Messrs, Foot and McDougall and his lady,

Grand Salutation M. T.
March 15th

Yce
Cutting Messrs
Post Master

Rev. Abalom Peters.
Cor. Sec. of the A. S. M. Society
City of New York.

881

and the lady also of the Commanding Officer Col. Cutler united with us; two other officers wives were prevented by ill health from attending.

This little flock, Dear Sir, need some one to watch over and guide them; they are exposed to strong temptations and have to encounter from their associates much opposition and reproach; but counting in some measure as I trust the cost they have taken up the cross boldly and shall they, must they be compelled to contend alone and can no one be found possessing suitable talents and qualifications to go and fill that place and intrust these in (to) preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the rest? Two or three others were indulging some hope that they had experienced religion, but did not feel prepared at that time to make a public profession. As an evidence of the desire of these men to receive instruction a few of them engaged of their own accord to give of their wages 20 dolls. a month for the sake of haveing preaching, and they raised 10 dolls and sent it off for religious publications.---

Yours very truly

Cutting Marshe Miss'ry to the
Stockbridge Indians

CONCLUSION

Today Michigan is one of the great industrial states of the Union. So great was its contribution in machines and munitions during the last war that it was frequently referred to as the "Arsenal of Democracy." Agriculturally it ranks very high among the other states, and in certain agricultural products it leads the nation in annual output. Its mines and forests have added immense wealth to the nation.

Each year Michigan attracts millions of tourists from all parts of the country who come here to enjoy its beautiful scenery and relax by its thousands of lakes and streams, travel its fine highways and marvel at its industrial centers. Surely many of the predictions of the missionaries who came to Michigan in its early days have been more than fulfilled, and the results have exceeded the most hopeful estimates as to what the future held.

Just how much these early missionaries contributed to the progress of our state can never be accurately computed. Their contribution was of such a nature as to defy computation or actual measurement. But that they mightily effected the future of the state would never be seriously disputed. Michigan's natural attributes are many, but without men and women to develop them to their fullest they would mean but little. In lending strong moral and spiritual direction to our pioneers, as is evidenced throughout the letters here reproduced, Michigan's present status among the sovereign states might have been much different. To all of our pioneers, both those remembered and those forgotten, whose "voices from the wilderness" we can still hear over the intervening years, we should be truly thankful.

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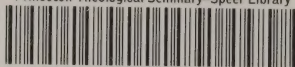
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